

# CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

NO. I.—VOL. III. BUFFALOE, (BETHANY) BROOKE CO. VA., AUGUST 1, 1825.

Style no man on earth your Father: for he alone is your Father who is in heaven: and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only One Teacher; neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only One Leader—the Messiah.

## PREFATORY REMARKS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the flood of opposition which was intended to have overwhelmed this work, and aimed at its destruction by an ambitious priesthood and their deluded admirers, it has acquired an extensive growth in its circulation, and a vigor which opposition alone could give it. A spirit of investigation and of unbiased inquiry, which we had scarcely anticipated, appears to have aroused into activity the dormant energies of a priest-ridden community. We have every reason to hope that this spirit will not give sleep to its eyes, nor slumber to its eye-lids, until many shall clearly see and comprehensively understand, the mighty difference existing between the kingdom of the Clergy, and that of the Saviour of the world. We have little to promise but *perseverance* in the arduous conflict, so long as the same necessities exist, and until we shall see the ancient order of things restored in some good degree. Our constant readers have, perhaps, been expecting a series of essays upon some topics in our prospectus, scarcely yet touched. We have only to request a due exercise of patience on their part, and to offer as an apology the great press of many matters more immediately bearing upon existing circumstances. We intend to leave nothing undone, and to accomplish all that has been promised, as we have opportunity; but prudence is necessary to direct. We have also the proffered assistance of some of the most able and distinguished Nicodemuses of the times, and shall thankfully receive and promptly attend to their communications upon general and important matters. For there are a goodly number of those even amongst the priesthood that bid us God speed, although for the present distress they think it expedient to remain in the conclaves of the powerful. We must sympathize with them a little, for as Paul said, "all men have not faith," so we see all men have not courage.

While the press is pouring forth every day fresh oil into the lamp, which guides the devotion of the thoughtless, and makes them think that they see the sun in a smoky wick, not an editor in the East nor in the West of all the Luminaries and religious Heralds, has ventured to dispute one inch of the ground that we claim. And yet their snarling shows they would bite if they could. They seem to know that the less they say the better for them and their cause; and perhaps they are right. The editors of the Western Luminary did positively promise in December last, to enter the field of investigation, and to oppose us manfully; but not a syllable has appeared on the subject in any of their numbers that we have seen. They have either quit pub-

lishing, or ceased to send us their paper, for we have not seen one for a month. Perhaps they are of the same spirit with our neighbor the *Pittsburgh Recorder*, who, after he had agreed and promised to exchange papers with us, soon as we began to inquire what he was doing he forgot his agreement and ceased to send us his paper. These gentry seem to know, or at least to think, that their cause will not bear the light of open discussion, and that a *silent* course is the best policy. They have given sufficient evidence by their occasional notices, that if they could do any thing in the way of public discussion, they would soon be at it. We do not say these things to provoke them into a controversy, for we have no expectation that there is any excitability in them, but merely to show the manner of spirit they are of. We must confess that we cannot view with other feelings than those due to a thief and a robber, who covers himself with the curtains of night, that he may execute his designs, those who attempt to extend their empire over the human mind and conscience, by suppressing the truth or withholding the light from the eyes of those who look up to them as their guides. This they do by prejudicing the minds of many against the truth. We hope the day is not far distant, in which it will be admitted, that true charity, benevolence and philanthropy consist not in flattering the wicked, nor in speaking peace to every body, but in withstanding to the face, as Paul did Peter, all those errorists, whether acting the part of the deceiver or the deceived.

EDITOR.

### *Christian Union.—No II.*

I AM aware of the prejudices which each christian sect feels for their own name and creed, and of the great difficulty there will be in getting them to drop them, or to exchange them for the name of Christian and the word of God. I fear that there are many professing christians among what are called *Protestant* sects, who, rather than make this exchange, would unite with the Roman Catholics in defence of human authority, in legislating for, and dictating to the consciences of men in religion. In this they would act consistently, if they really entertain the sentiment expressed by Dr. Miller, "that the adoption of a creed," (or confession of faith such as the Westminster,) "is not only *lawful* and *expedient*, but also *indispensably* necessary." They ought, however, in that case to be consistent throughout, and to join themselves to the church of Rome. For if any church or people have authority from God to form creeds and confessions in religion, (and without divine authority there is no right,)

the church of Rome had it before, and, as the elder and mother church ought to have been obeyed; and consequently the Reformation, as it has been called, was a rebellion against superiors, a disobedience of the divine authority vested in that church, and ought as such to be renounced by returning to it. If indeed it be lawful for men to substitute their speculations and notions derived from nature, and their views of scripture for scripture itself, and to impose them upon men's consciences, it will be very difficult to show upon what principle the church of Rome can be condemned for having thus acted. It will not do to say that they went too far, for they had as good a right to judge how far they might go as those have who condemn them. Dr. Miller's whole defence of creeds is based upon the deism or natural religion of John Calvin. This deism is at the foundation of, and pervades every system of sectarian religion in christendom; it had its origin in Pagan philosophy, relative to innate ideas of God which was at an early period incorporated with the christian religion. The following sentiments are extracted from Calvin's *Institutes*, vol. I. chap. iii. "*The human mind naturally endowed with the knowledge of God.*"

"We lay it down as a position not to be controverted, that the human mind, even by rational instinct, possesses some sense of a Deity—for God has given to all some apprehension of his existence; some sense of divinity is inscribed on every heart. All men have by nature an innate persuasion of the divine existence, a persuasion inseparable from their very constitution. The sense of a Deity is a doctrine not first to be learned in the schools, but every man from his birth is self-taught. Men need not go out of themselves for a clear discovery of God—the seeds of divinity are sown in the nature of man." In opposition to all this, the word of God says that "the world by wisdom knew not God;" and so say the history of the world and the experience and consciousness of every individual. Locke exploded the doctrine of innate ideas. All the present systems, however, retain the consequences of that doctrine, which are seen in natural religion or deism, which is a religion without revelation, and in scholastic theology, and mystic divinity. These are taught in all theological schools, colleges, and universities in christendom. True philosophy and the bible make revelation essential to religion. Men are born with innate capacities or susceptibility for acquiring the idea or knowledge of Deity; but revelation, supernatural revelation, is necessary for enlightening or improving that capacity, for giving the idea or knowledge of God.

The point must be sooner or later conceded, that Christ is the light of the world in religion and spiritual things, and that in his church he is himself the only sovereign and head; that he only has power to decree articles of faith and the authority thereof, and that he alone has a right to ordain rites and ceremonies, and to fix the terms of communion and of church membership; and consequently that no ecclesiastics or earthly princes have power to make laws in his kingdom which shall bind the consciences of his subjects, *Matt. xx. 25—27. chap. xxiii. 8, 9. chap. xxviii. 18—20, 1st Cor. viii. 6. Eph. i. 22. Jas. iv. 12.* According to Christ's system of laws, and the principles of his kingdom, the members of that kingdom may differ in opinion and in conscience too, in some matters of religion, without disunion, and without forming creeds, and confessions, and sectarian churches, in opposition to each other. It is made even a part of christian duty for members of his church to tolerate a difference of opinion and

sentiment, not in respect to human creeds, for their very existence is an abomination: they produce divisions, and are to be opposed every where.

Read the fourteenth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The principles contained in that chapter should be regarded as the great charter of christian liberty. They are the strongest barriers against all usurpations on the rights of conscience, whether by ecclesiastical or civil powers. The kingdom of God is in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost: we are therefore commanded to follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Do, Mr. Editor, print for us in the Christian Baptist the substance of Macknight's "view and illustration of the matter contained in the 14th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans." And do you, reader, read that chapter in connexion with 1st Cor. viii. chapter, with care. The principles of moral conduct for christians towards each other united in Christ, in these chapters are less understood, seldomer thought of, and less practised than many of us are aware of.

With respect to the christian religion, nothing appears to me to be more absurd and contradictory than for men to talk or think of speaking divine or supernatural things in human language. This is very common, however, in theological schools, and in lectures on divinity: this is according to the Calvinistic vocabulary, with which Thomas Paine and all the Deists agree. Then in comes the mystic agencies, by which human and natural language is made to produce divine or supernatural effects!!

Human language, that is words and sentences invented by men, cannot rise higher than the objects of human thought, and the ideas of nature; nor can it exist antecedent to them. The ideas of supernatural or divine things are obtained by or through supernatural or divine language; that is, by language which originated with God. But according to the system of natural religion, the mind possesses these ideas naturally, or obtains them by reasoning, and invents the language which communicates them without revelation. If we would ourselves speak divine truths, or teach others, we must use the terms in which it was revealed. It is one thing to speak of divine things, and another to speak divine things. We may use our own language, the language arising from sensation, and reflection in speaking of or concerning them, after the divine objects are known: the knowledge, however, and belief of them must be first obtained by the scriptural terms and statements in which they were revealed; and if we would retain them, and communicate them to others, they must be retained and communicated, in the terms and statements in which we learned them.

There is a state of mind, of feelings, of affection or emotion arising from the operation of the Divine Spirit, through, or with, or by, his gospel truth upon the human heart, which is termed an experience of grace, or religious experience, which accords with the word of God. In detailing of this experience the language used derives its qualifications from the states of feelings and sensation which it describes. No person who has not experienced these states can speak of them from the heart. To obtain this we must use gospel truth as the Spirit operates by and through it.

It is thought by some that the opposition to human creeds and confessions may be applied with equal force against the public preaching and teaching of religion. I think not. Public addresses are made on the subject of religion to



bring to people's minds scriptural views of divine things which have been learnt by the speaker, and to assist the hearers by a language addressed to their understandings and feelings, and which associates their best interests and chief happiness with the objects of faith as revealed in the gospel, to understand the scriptures and to believe them; but these addresses are never designed to be creeds and confessions for the hearers. Nothing that teachers say in their public discourses is intended to be paramount to the word of God; in many cases creeds are, inasmuch, that men are liable to be treated as heathen men and publicans under their operations, who in all respects, according to the gospel, are entitled to the rights and privileges of Christ's church. Yes, they may be accepted by God, and yet refused admittance into this sectarian kingdom; or if already members of a church constituted upon a human creed, are liable to be cast out by the operation of that creed, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and given to the Devil, and for no other reason than an uncompromitting adherence to the word of God, and authority of Christ according to the gospel, in preference to the authority of the Westminster assembly, or of John Wesley and his hierarchy, or of the Philadelphia association, or the authority of Henry VIII. and his bishops and successors in the Episcopal church! This is no extraordinary operation of creeds and confessions, for it arises necessarily from sectarian constitutions, and every christian who is faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ, and is determined to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith he has made him free," ought to be turned out, must and will be turned out, of the churches built upon human creeds, if they exercise consistent discipline! Paul himself would be! Reader, weigh this well and you must see and feel the contrariety of opposition which exists between sectarian churches and the church of Christ. This is the reason why Christianity, as it is improperly called by the different sects, produces so little good in the world.

The christian religion was designed by its Divine Author to remedy all the evils which are incident to man's state of sin and misery in the world, and to make men happy and united in peace and love. This design has not been, and is not accomplished but in a very partial and imperfect degree, among even the professors of religion. And why is this the case? I answer, That by reason of Christ having been divided, christianity has been converted into a system of war, of persecution, and oppression, not against the common enemy, the destroyer of men's souls and of their happiness, so much as against each sect, and by each to the destruction of the spirit, and character and felicities of that religion as revealed in the gospel.

Who has not seen and felt the operation of sectarian indignation in our country, in arraying citizens, relations, and friends, against each other, who were at peace before they assumed the sectarian badge? Yes reader, you have seen the peace and happiness of families wounded and destroyed by this fiend-like influence; and have you not felt some of it too? Can that system of things which produces these effects be the religion of Jesus Christ as it appears in the gospel, the religion of him who is the Prince of Peace, and the author of good will, and kindness, and love among men? Oh no! an enemy has done this; it was done by "false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ; and, no wonder, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." 2d Cor. xi. 13, 14.

This old enemy has imposed upon the people of God, as he did upon Eve and Adam in Paradise, by adding a new chapter to the Bible under the alluring and apparently innocent title of "Non-Essentials," with a view of dividing Christ, and of securing his influence, and retaining human creeds, and sects, and authority, in religion.

Is it a non-essential that the new name, the name of Christ, and of Christian be made to give place to the name of Presbyterian, or of Baptist, or of Methodist, or of Episcopalian? Is it a non-essential that men should believe in, and serve the Lord Jesus, by the lessons, and instructions, and authority, of human wisdom, taught in creeds, confessions, books of discipline, and liturgies, rather than through the word of the Apostles and the authority of Christ? Is it a non-essential that christians be divided by reason of this into different factions, and be involved in conduct towards each other which occasions the christian religion often to be derided by the world as a curse to the peace of society, and the name of Jesus Christ to be blasphemed among the Gentiles? Is it a non-essential that the world of mankind should remain in unbelief and be damned? Reader, answer these questions in reference to the part you have acted, and are now acting in this sectarian business, with the awful truth impressed upon your mind, that "we shall all stand before Christ's judgment seat, and every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." Hear the Saviour's prayer for unity through the word of the Apostles, amongst his disciples, and in his church, that the world might believe on him. This prayer he put up before he entered upon his sufferings; and to accomplish the objects of which he endured the agonies in the garden and on the cross, descended into the tomb, rose from the dead, and now fills his Father's throne with all power in heaven and in earth. "Neither pray I for these (the Apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they may be one; as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you have sent me." *John xvii. 20, 21.*

This is God's plan for union and for the conversion of the world, Satan's chapter of Non-Essentials notwithstanding. We are constantly praying and laboring for the conversion of sinners among us, and for the conversion of the heathen; but as long as we retain our sectarian divisions, God is bound to his Son, as far as these divisions are concerned, not to hear our prayers nor bless our exertions. The prayer and intercession of Jesus Christ are, that all christians may be one through the word of the apostles, that the world may believe in him: his honor, and glory, and faithfulness are bound up in this order. Should our prayers and exertions be heard, and blessed, in the present state of division and disunion, as far as they are concerned, the Lord Jesus Christ would be dishonored, his truth would fail, and the covenant of the Father to the Son, that he will give the Jews and the Heathen to him for his inheritance, according to the principles of the new covenant in the gospel, would be broken. None are converted to Christ on sectarian principles. Then why retain them? The different sects have not sufficiently realized that God in the conversion of sinners does nothing more than to make them christians, and place them immediately in the love, and under the direction, instruction and government of Jesus Christ. The inquiry of the new convert is, "Lord what will you have me to do?" The Lord directs him to search the scriptures, and in them he gives precisely the same directions to all, and which,

when humbly received and practiced, produces the unity and happiness of the saints, and the employment of the means for the conversion of the world. Sectarianism, with the chapter of non-essentials in its hand, and with the pestilential breath that blasted men's happiness in Eden, interposes, and as far as possible, robs the saint of the name of his Saviour; and of his authority too, by giving him the name of a sect and its book of laws: by its subtilty it kidnaps him, and takes from him his christian liberty, and makes a galley slave of him to tug the balance of his days at a sectarian oar; or plundered of his divine inheritance as far as the universal love and fellowship of the saints; and the sweet smiles of the Saviour are concerned; and as far as active usefulness in promoting the common salvation, and human happiness, from parts of it in the present life, he appears an exile from his father's home in a far country, engaged in feeding swine and in eating husks. The language of the Saviour to such is, "return you backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding; wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfies not?" The answer of every christian ought to be, "behold we come quickly to you, for you are the Lord our God."

I know it is said that all these things will be brought right when the millennium shall come. I reply that it will be by the correction of these errors that the millennial day will be ushered in. It is moreover alledged that the different sects of christians must be greatly changed from what they are at present in their religion, before they will agree to unite upon the gospel and throw away their creeds. I think otherwise. Every real christian will obey God, rather than men. "My sheep" said the Saviour, "hear my voice and they follow me—a stranger they will not follow." All that is needed for the restoration of the church to the apostolic order, is, that christians be christians, and act as the disciples of Jesus Christ. Let them throw aside their sectarian distinctions, and the commandments of men, and take the name of their Lord, and the word of God, and cultivate mutual forbearance towards each other, and tenderness for each other's conscientious differences in opinions, according to *Romans* xiv. and they will quickly feel the truth and meaning of what the Saviour said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." And again, "If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed: and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." And "If the Son shall make you free you shall be free indeed:"—free from error, and ignorance, and sectarian bigotry, and free to love Christ and his people and cause universally, and free to be engaged in all christian duties for promoting the conversion of the world, and for making mankind happy and glorious.

But I am asked whether I design to drop the ordinance of baptism by throwing away the name of Baptist? Without saying a word about sprinkling, pouring, washing, or dipping of adults or infants, I answer that my design is that every doctrine and ordinance be preserved in their proper place according to gospel order, and that every thing be called by its proper name, in the fixed style of the Holy Ghost. The Baptist said, (we have no account in scripture of but one Baptist,) "Christ must increase, but I must decrease." It is high time that this be the case. Paul was greater than John the Baptist, (*Matt.* xi. 11.) yet he would not permit any of Christ's

disciples to call themselves by his name, or by the name of Apollos, or of Peter. All sects may have something good among them; but that good is common property, and ought not to be limited by sectarian barriers or conditions. God makes it the duty of every christian to oppose every sectarian name and creed, and they have a divine right to do so; but none have a right to oppose the name of Christ or his oracles. He makes it the duty of all who are built upon the Lord Jesus Christ by faith in him, for his name's sake to exercise tenderness and forbearance towards each other in points of conscientious differences, but never to divide or form new sects or creeds. I shall say something about the origin, and growth, and effects of creeds hereafter, in promoting orthodoxy, &c., beginning with what has been falsely called "the Apostles' Creed." I will then address the clergy particularly on their duty in these United States.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

### *A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.*

#### *No. VI.*

#### *On the Breaking of Bread.—No. I.*

IN our last number we demonstrated from rational principles, that there necessarily must be, and most certainly is, a divinely instituted worship for christian assemblies; and that this worship is uniformly the same in all meetings of the disciples on the first day of the week. That the breaking of bread in commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ, is a part, or an act of christian worship, is generally admitted by professors of christianity. Romanists and Protestants of almost every name agree in this. The society of Friends form the chief, if not the only exception in christendom, to this general acknowledgment. Their religion is all *spiritual*, and may be suitable to beings of some higher order than the natural descendants of Adam and Eve; but it is too contemplative, too metaphysical, too sublime, for flesh and blood. We have tongues and lips wherewith men have been impiously cursed, but with which God should be blessed. We have bodies too which have become the instruments of unrighteousness, but which should be employed as instruments of righteousness. And so long as the five senses are the five avenues to the human understanding, and the medium of all divine communication to the spirit of man, so long will it be necessary to use them in the cultivation and exhibition of piety and humanity. But we have a few words for them in due time, for we esteem them highly on many accounts. But in the mean time, we speak to those who acknowledge the breaking of bread to be a divine institution, and a part of christian worship in christian assemblies, to be continued not only till the Lord came and destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, but to be continued until he shall come to judge the world.

That the primitive disciples did, in all their meetings on the first day of the week, attend on the breaking of bread as an essential part of the worship due their Lord, we are fully persuaded, and hope to make satisfactorily evident to every candid christian. Indeed this is already proved from what has been said in the fifth number under this head. For, if there be a divinely instituted worship for christians in their meetings on the first day of the week, as has been proved; if this order, or these acts of worship are uniformly the same, as has been shown; and if the breaking of bread be an act of christian worship, as is admitted by those we address—then it is



fairly manifest that the disciples are to break bread in all their meetings for worship. This we submit as the first, but not the strongest argument in support of our position. We confess, however, that we cannot see any way of eluding its logical and legitimate force, though we are aware it is not so well adapted to every understanding as those which are to follow. Our second argument will be drawn from the nature, import and design of the breaking of bread. This we shall first illustrate a little.

While Romanists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians of every grade, Independents, Methodists, Baptists &c., acknowledge the breaking of bread to be a divine institution, an act of religious worship in christian assemblies, they all differ in their views of the import of the institution, the manner and times in which it is to be observed, and in the appendages thereto belonging. In one idea they all agree, that it is an *extraordinary* and not an *ordinary* act of christian worship; and consequently, does not belong to the ordinary worship of the christian church. For this opinion they have custom and tradition to show, but not one argument worthy of a moment's reflection, not even one text to adduce as a confirmation of their practice. Who ever heard a text adduced to prove a monthly, a quarterly, a semi-annual, or an annual breaking of bread. This course in regard to this institution, I conjecture, drove the founders of the Quaker system into the practice of *never breaking bread*—just as the views of the clergy make and confirm Deists.

Much darkness and superstition are found in the minds and exhibited in the practice of the devout annual, semi-annual and quarterly observers of the breaking of bread. They generally make a Jewish passover of it. Some of them indeed, make a Mount Sinai convocation of it. With all the bitterness of sorrow, and gloominess of superstition, they convert it into a religious penance, accompanied with a morose piety and an awful affliction of soul and body, expressed in fastings, long prayers, and sad countenances on sundry days of humiliation, fasting and preparation. And the only joy exhibited on the occasion, is, that all is over; for which some of them appoint a day of thanksgiving. They rejoice that they have approached the very base of Mount Sinai unhurt by stone or dart. In the opposite degrees of their ascent to, and descent from this preternatural solemnity, their piety is equal. In other words, they are as pious one week or ten weeks after, as they were one week or ten weeks before. If there be anything fitly called superstition in this day and country, this pre-eminently deserves the name. A volume would be by far too small to exhibit all the abuses of this sacred institution in the present age.

The intelligent christian views it quite in another light. It is to him as sacred and solemn as prayer to God, and as joyful as the hope of immortality and eternal life. His hope before God, springing from the death of his Son, is gratefully exhibited and expressed by him in the observance of this institution. While he participates of the symbolic loaf, he shews his faith in, and his life upon, the Bread of life. While he tastes the emblematic cup, he remembers the new covenant confirmed by the blood of the Lord. With sacred joy and blissful hope he hears the Saviour say, "This is my body broken—this my blood shed for you." When he reaches forth those lively emblems of his Saviour's love to his christian brethren, the philanthropy of God fills his heart, and excites correspondent feelings to those sharing with him the salvation of the Lord. Here he

knows no man after the flesh. Ties that spring from eternal love, revealed in blood and addressed to his senses in symbols adapted to the whole man, draw forth all that is within him of complacent affection and feeling to those joint heirs with him of the grace of eternal life. While it represents to him all the salvation of the Lord, it is the strength of his faith, the joy of his hope, and the life of his love. It cherishes the peace of God, and inscribes the image of God upon his heart, and leaves not out of view the revival of his body from the dust of death, and its glorious transformation to the likeness of the Son of God.

It is an institution full of wisdom and goodness, every way adapted to the christian mind. As bread and wine to the body, so it strengthens his faith and cheers his heart with the love of God. It is a religious feast; a feast of joy and gladness; the happiest occasion, and the sweetest antepast on earth of the society and entertainment of heaven, that mortals meet with on their way to the true Canaan. If such be its nature and import, and such its design, say, ye saints, whether this act of christian worship would be a privilege, or a pain, in all your meetings for edification and worship. If it be any proof of the kindness of the Saviour to institute it at all, would it not be a greater proof to allow the saints in all their meetings to have this token of his love set before them, and they called to partake? If it were goodness and grace on his part to allow you twice a-year in your meetings the privilege, would it not be inexpressibly greater goodness and grace to allow you the feast in all your meetings. But reverse the case, and convert it into an awful and grievous penance, and then grace is exhibited in not enforcing it but seldom. On this view of it, if it be an act of favor to command it only twice a-year, it would be a greater good to command it but twice or once during life. Just, then, as we understand its nature and design, will its frequency appear a favor or a frown.

It is acknowledged to be a blissful privilege, and this acknowledgment, whether sincere or feigned, accords with fact. It was the design of the Saviour that his disciples should not be deprived of this joyful festival where they meet in one place to worship God. It will appear (if it does not already) to the candid reader of these numbers, that the New Testament teaches that every time they met in honor of the resurrection of the Prince of Life, or, when they assembled in one place, it was a principal part of their entertainment, in his liberal house, to eat and drink with him. He keeps no dry lodgings for the saints—no empty house for his friends. He never bade his house assemble but to eat and drink with him. His generous and philanthropic heart never sent his disciples hungry away. He did not assemble them to weep, and wail, and starve with him. No, he commands them to rejoice always, and bids them eat and drink abundantly.

Man is a social animal. As the thirsty hind pants for the brooks of water, so man pants for society congenial to his mind. He feels a relish for the social hearth and the social table; because the feast of sentimental and congenial minds is the feast of reason. Man, alone and solitary, is but half blessed in any circumstances. Alone and solitary, he is like the owl in the desert, and pelican in the wilderness. The social feast is the native offspring of social minds. Savage or civilized, man has his social fire, and his social board. And shall the christian house and family be always the poorest and the emptiest under heaven? Is the Lord of christians a churl? Is he sordidly selfish? Is he parsimoniously poor and niggardly?

Tell it not amongst the admirers of anniversaries! publish it not amongst the frequenters of any human association! lest the votaries of Ceres rejoice! lest the sons of Bacchus triumph!

The christian is a *man*. He has the feelings of a man. He has a taste for society; but it is the society of kindred minds. The religion of Jesus Christ is a religion for *men*; for rational, for social, for grateful beings. It has its feasts, and its joys, and its extacies too. The Lord's house is his banqueting place, and the Lord's day is his weekly festival.

But a sacrament, an annual sacrament, or a quarterly sacrament, is like the oath of a Roman soldier, from which it derives its name, often taken with reluctance, and kept with bad faith. It is as sad as a funeral parade. The knell of the parish bell that summonses the mourners to the house of sorrow, and the tocsin that awakes the recollection of a sacramental morn, are heard with equal dismay and aversion. The seldomer they occur, the better. We speak of them as they appear to be; and if they are not what they appear to be, they are mere exhibitions of hypocrisy and deceit, and serve no other purpose than as they create a market for silks and calicoes, and an occasion for the display of beauty and fashion.

Amongst the crowds of the thoughtless and superstitious that frequent them, it is reasonable to expect to find a few sincere and devout; but this will not justify their character, else the worshippers of saints and angels might be excused; for many of the sincere and devout say, Amen!

From the nature and design of the breaking of bread, we would argue its necessity and importance as a part of the entertainment of saints in the social worship of the Lord in their assemblies for his praise and their comfort. We cannot prosecute the subject farther at present. We have been preparing the way for opening the New Testament in our next number, to produce evidence and authority of a higher order. In the mean time, let the christian who apprehends the nature, meaning and design of this institution, say whether it be *probable* that it is, or could be an *extraordinary* observance, and not an ordinary part of christian worship in the meeting of saints.

EDITOR.

#### Notification.

WHEREAS the Rev. Mr. Blackburn, D. D. a Presbyterian of the town of Louisville, Kentucky, has declared that he did, in a sermon pronounced in Frankfort, "sweep from the arena" the sentiments and views expressed by me in an address delivered in the chamber of the Representatives of the state of Kentucky in November last, and that in my presence too; (in this point, however, he is mistaken, as I was in Lexington the time he spoke on that subject,) this is to inform the said Rev. Mr. Blackburn, D. D. that I am prepared to defend, illustrate and establish those sentiments and views before his face, and where he shall have an equal liberty of opposing all he has to say in defence of his views and sentiments, on the same subject. It will be remembered by many present at that time in Frankfort, that the most offensive item in my address and the most obnoxious to the displeasure of the priesthood, was, "that it was no part of the revealed design of the Saviour to employ clergymen, or an order of men resembling the priesthood, in the diffusion, spread, or progress of his religion in the world. In brief, that the whole Paido-Baptist priesthood is an order of men unauthorized by Heaven. They

are neither constituted, commissioned, nor authorized by the Head of the Church to officiate in any one of their assumptions."

I would most respectfully inform the Rev. Mr. Blackburn, D. D. that I feel ready, as far as in me is, to contend for the truth of every sentiment advanced on that subject; and am disposed, all things concurring, to meet him any where within one hundred miles of Louisville, in the month of May or June next, for the discussion of that proposition. I engage upon his taking the affirmative, to show that the whole fraternity of Paido-Baptist clergymen, divines, or ministers, is a human institution, neither commanded, appointed, or decreed by God, to officiate in the office which they have assumed; that all their right so to officiate is self-constituted and bestowed; and is supported merely by a laity whose consciences are, in this respect, created and made by those priests that made and created themselves, and who preached the people into a deep sense of the reverence due to them as the Lord's anointed ones.

I would wish to have it distinctly understood that the whole grounds of debate on this subject are expressed in the following proposition, viz.—

That the Presbyterian clergy, or any other fraternity of Paido-Baptist clergy, is an order of men divinely constituted and authorized.

The Doctor and his brethren say that this proposition is *true* as far as respects their denomination. I am constrained to think, and therefore say, that it is *false*.

Now as public discussion, conducted with moderation and good temper, is of all means the best adapted to elicit inquiry and exhibit truth, I am constrained, from a sense of the high importance of this question, to propose (should the Doctor decline) to meet in conference any minister of the synod of Kentucky, on this proposition; and should they all decline calling this matter into question, I will agree, as far as in my power, to meet any minister of learning and good standing, of any denomination, who will agree to support the above proposition or anyone equivalent thereto, and endeavor to show that it is as false as the assumptions of the Roman Pontiff.

As the Doctor has boasted that he has already "swept from the arena" my sentiments and views on this subject, it gives a peculiar direction to this invitation to him. My duty requires me to give him a welcome invitation to do it again in my presence, and before all who may please to hear him do it. He shall have every respect due to his standing and reputation; and I hereby pledge myself to submit to any rules of decorum any three respectable citizens shall appoint, one of them being chosen by him, another by me, and a third by these two.

I do not suppose that any intelligent man, or any friend to free inquiry, will snarl at this proposal. If it be lawful to advance a proposition, it is lawful to defend it; and if it be lawful to defend, it is lawful to defend it in the presence of them who say they can assail it. And if it be lawful, generous and christian-like, to attack the sentiments of those whose views differ from our own, in their absence, it is surely as christian-like, as generous and as lawful, to do so in their presence. And if the Doctor has done all he says he has done once, he can more easily do it a second time—and to much greater advantage. Few comparatively had the benefit of his address on that occasion: many would have the benefit of his views in such a full discussion. Public feeling, the circumstances of the times, zeal for truth, and a respect to all that is manly,



good and fair, render this call upon this Divine truly imperative.

July 16, 1825.

A. CAMPELL.

*To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.*

DEAR SIR—I HAVE read a series of numbers of the "*Christian Baptist*" with interest, and am much pleased with your professing to discard from your creed every thing that has not the express sanction of the Holy Scriptures. These, if I rightly understand you, you consider the christian's *only rule* of faith and practice. Thus far I cordially agree with you. I am likewise much pleased with your generous offer to publish in the *Christian Baptist* any well written piece in opposition to any sentiment you have therein advanced. From the above I have taken the liberty to present the following queries for your inspection, presuming you will feel no reluctance to give a reason for any thing you believe or practice:—

Where have the scriptures declared that the New Testament is exclusively the christian's guide?

Where do you find authority for calling the first day of the week "Lord's Day?"

Where are you commanded to celebrate the resurrection of Christ every week?

In all my biblical researches I have never been able to find a warrant for either.

That the ceremonial law is abolished, and that the political law of the Jews never was obligatory on any other nation, I cheerfully admit; but that the moral law was confined to the Jews, or that it has ever been abrogated, I have yet to learn. If I do not misapprehend the New Testament writers, they have every where (when speaking of the moral law) spoke of it with respect. "Think not," says the Saviour, "that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," &c. *Matt. v. 17—19*. To argue that he came to fulfil, and thereby destroy it, would be directly charging him with self contradiction. If he destroyed by fulfilling it, then he accomplished what he never came to do. Besides, I cannot conceive how a man could justly be censured for breaking one of these commandments, or for teaching others so to do, if Christ had destroyed the whole. Many other places might be quoted where the New Testament writers "establish the law."

If the Scriptures do not call the first day Lord's Day, and we take the liberty to apply that title to it; or if God has not commanded us to celebrate the resurrection of Christ weekly, and yet we attend to it—in either case we are found on Paidobaptist ground; and if we can walk with them thus far without an express warrant, I conceive we cannot censure them for sprinkling infants, without manifesting the most glaring inconsistency.

As in the second volume of the *Christian Baptist* you refer to the first, I have taken the liberty to send you the numbers of our Magazine complete, and request you in turn to send us the first volume of the *Christian Baptist*. We have suspended the publication of our magazine for a short period, but expect to resume it soon. We invite you to a cordial perusal of its contents, in which you will find several typographical errors, especially in the Greek, which you will have the goodness to correct in reading.

We cheerfully reciprocate your offer to publish in our future numbers any friendly remarks in opposition to any thing published in our magazine. We conceive that free inquiry is the open road to truth; and if we are wrong, we will thank our friends to set us right. I flatter myself that you

will give an answer to my queries, either in the *Christian Baptist* or by letter.

Yours respectfully, ELI S. BAILEY.

*To MR. ELI S. BAILEY.*

*One of the Editors of the Seventh Day Baptist Magazine.*

DEAR SIR—I AM ready to give you a reason for my belief and practice touching those things whereof you inquire of me. In relation to your first query, I have to object to the terms in which it is proposed. The example of Abraham and of the Jewish worthies, together with many of the admonitions and precepts found in the Jewish Scriptures, may be, and doubtless are, of importance to guide and encourage christians in the right way. The things, too, that happened to the Jews, happened to them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come; consequently, of use to guide us. But if you ask, Where do the Scriptures of the prophets or apostles declare that the apostolic writings are to be our exclusive guide in the christian religion, I am prepared to say that we are expressly and repeatedly taught, in all matters of religious observance or of christian obedience, to be guided by Jesus the Messiah, and not by Moses—by the apostles, and not by the Jewish prophets. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Now Moses commanded the people to obey that prophet whom the Lord should raise up to them like to him. Moses and Elias, when they descended from heaven and laid their commission at his feet, recognized his character as the one, or only Christian Lawgiver; and a voice from the excellent glory commanded the disciples to hear the beloved Son when Moses and Elias were taken to heaven. The law and the prophets also were to continue only until the seed came; for the law and the prophets were until John, but since that time a new religion and a new kingdom were set up. Christians are declared not to be under the law, but under the gospel, or the grace. Even the Jews, who believed in Jesus as the prophet and king whom God sent to Israel, were said to be like a woman whose former husband was dead; no longer bound to obey him, but at liberty to be married to, and to become subject to another lord or husband. Indeed a considerable part of the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and almost all the Epistle to the Hebrews, are written to prove that believers in Christ are not under Moses as a guide in the christian religion, but under Christ, who is a Son over his own house, and not a servant in another's house, like Moses. Moses, as a servant, faithfully delivered laws to the people over whom he reigned; but Jesus Christ, as a Son, gives laws to those over whom he reigns as our prophet and king. For further reasons why we believe that we are now to continue in the apostles' doctrine, and to submit to them exclusively in Christ's house, see *Christian Baptist*, vol. I. p. 38—40. To this add, that when Jesus promised thrones to the Apostles in his church, he left none for Moses nor Elias—not Moses, but the twelve apostles of the Lamb, were to judge or give statutes to Israel. And when the Great King commissioned them, he commanded them to teach only what he commanded them. "Teach the disciples," said he, "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The *I* is inclusive of all Christ commanded, and exclusive of every thing else. Hence, so long as we believe the apostles to be faithful men, their example, or the examples of the churches whom they commended, are exactly of the same force

as a broad precept. If you had seen the first volume of this work and the address alluded to (a copy of each I have now sent you) I think those questions would have appeared to you unnecessary, at least the first one.

Under the new constitution all disciples live if they knew it; and if you go back to Moses for a Sabbath, you may go back to him for a new moon, a holy day or what you please. And indeed we are, and must be confessed to be, either under the old constitution or the new. We cannot be under both. We cannot live under the English and American constitution at the same time. If I were to go to Moses for a "*Seventh Day Sabbath*," I should not blush to take from him an eighth day circumcision or an annual passover. I have paid a good deal of attention to your Magazine, particularly on this topic of your peculiarity, and must think that you are inconsistent in telling me any thing about Paido-Baptist ground. But I should be glad to see the seventh day kept by those who have a conscience in this matter, as the law requires; and perhaps in keeping it this way, at least *once* in a life-time, they might become enlightened in its meaning. Please see vol. I. p. 43-46.

Your second question I will briefly answer. For the same reason that Paul calls the table on which the emblems of Christ's death are exhibited "the Lord's table," we call the day on which he rose from the dead and brought life and immortality to light, the Lord's day. It is true that every day in the week, as some say, is the Lord's; and so is every table in the world, for "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof;" yet an apostle *once* calls this table the Lord's table. But if this reason will not be satisfactory to all, we have another. We have as much reason to believe that the first day of the week is once called by an apostle *the Lord's day*, as we have to believe that the table alluded to is once called the Lord's—"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Now after hearing all that I could hear, and reading all that I could read, from the Sabbatarians and others, on these words, I must contend that no meaning can be affixed to them, from any thing in the whole record, but that the writer intended the day of the Lord's resurrection. For if he meant the gospel day, as some would have it, then the apostle degrades himself to a puerility, incompatible with his standing as a man—much more as an apostle. For as he intended to acquaint the reader addressed with that day in his exile on which he received the revelation, to have taken a name that was as indefinite as the whole gospel age, or to have taken a name not generally understood at that time as expressive of any particular day, would have been childish in the extreme.

But again, the first day of the week is emphatically the Lord's, for this reason, that on this day he was *begotten*—at least Paul says so. See his application of a part of the second psalm, *Acts* xiii. 34. "THIS DAY have I begotten you, my Son." Now these are my reasons (at least a number of them) for sometimes calling this day the Lord's day. I say *sometimes*, for I am not tenacious about its name. If you conscientiously prefer calling it the *first day* of the week, and regard it to the Lord as the first christians did, I am not conscientiously weak about the name, and should never force what may be a conclusion of my mind upon the religious practice of others. For I will admit that these reasons may not carry the same weight to every mind. But as you demanded my reasons for so denominating it in this way, (which is far from being a general practice)

I have given you them freely. They are at your service.

An answer to your third query you will find in the 6th and 7th numbers on the "*Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things*." This is of more importance than the *name* we give the day.

I feel gratified with the spirit and temper of your letter, and am only sorry that my limits forbid me giving it a more lengthy notice. The numbers which I have sent you, and which you had not seen before writing your communication of the 30th ultimo, are, I think, a full answer to the subject matter of your queries, and much more minute than I could now find room for. I would request you to examine very closely the two articles referred to in the first volume, and to consider them as an answer to your difficulties upon the Sabbath day of the Jews, and the Lord's day.

The distinctions of moral, political and ceremonial law, which run through your Magazine and letter, are of the same family with infant baptism. Some might make them twin-sisters; but I would rather view them as the elder and younger branches of the same root.

Your quotation of *Matthew* v. 17, is entirely irrelevant, as it equally applies to your ceremonial as to your moral law, and he was as exact in the ritual of Moses as any other minister of the circumcision. It applies to the prophets too, as well as to the law; yet it is said of him that he delivered his brethren the Jews from the law, and that when the object of faith was come, they were no longer under a schoolmaster. In contending for the due observance of the Lord's day we establish the law—as Paul did by faith. But in making Sabbath days for Gentiles in this northern latitude, we put a yoke on the necks of the disciples, which makes Christ of as little effect to them as he was to those who circumcised in order to be saved.

Yours respectfully, A. CAMPBELL.

#### *An Epitaph.*

BOLD infidelity, turn pale!  
Beneath this stone four infants' ashes lie:  
Say, are they lost or sav'd?  
If death's by sin, they sinn'd, because they're here:  
If heaven's by works, in heaven they can't appear.  
Reason, ah! how depriv'd!  
Revere the bible's sacred page, the knot's untied:  
They died, for Adam sinn'd;—they live, for Jesus died.  
*The Witness.*

No. 2.] SEPTEMBER 5, 1825.\*

*A Narrative of the Origin and Formation of the Westminster or Presbyterian Confession of Faith.—No. IV.*

THE parliament ordained, April 26, 1615, that "no person shall be permitted to preach who is not ordained a minister in this or some other reformed church, except such as intend the ministry, who shall be allowed for the trial of their gifts, by those that shall be appointed thereto by both houses of parliament; and it is earnestly desired that Sir *Thomas Fairfax* (a military chief tain) take care that this ordinance be put into execution in the army. It is further ordered to be sent to the lord mayor and committee of the militia in London, to the governors and commanders of all forts, garrisons, forces, cities and towns, with the like injunctions; and the mayor, sheriffs and justices of the peace, are to commit all offenders to safe custody, and give notice to the parliament, who will take a speedy course for their punishment."\* This is the way to make

\* Neal's History, vol. 3, p. 281.



and establish orthodoxy, and to show the divine institution of the clergy and presbytery, without the trouble of interrogating the twelve apostles. Thus the clergy had their lips opened, and the laity had theirs shut by the laws of the land; and the military and other rulers were to guard the consciences of the people with a drawn sword.

"At the same time the lords sent to the assembly of divines to prepare a new directory for the ordination of ministers of the church in England, without the presence of a diocesan bishop. This took up a great deal of time by reason of the opposition it met with from the Erastians and Independents; but was at last accomplished, and passed into an ordinance November 8, 1645, and was to continue in force by way of trial for twelve months. On the 23th of August following it was prolonged for three years, at the expiration of which time it was made perpetual."\*

The two fundamental rules of this *new* directory, which is now thought by many to be as *old* as Paul's time, ran thus:—*First*. "The person to be ordained must apply to the presbytery, with a testimonial of his taking the covenant, of his proficiency in his studies," &c., whether he can conjugate *tupto*, and decline *hic, hæc, hoc*, &c. &c. *Second*. "He is then to pass under an examination as to his religion and learning and call to the ministry." If he be called by God as Aaron was, to be a high priest, and can tell how religious he is, he is then to be anointed by the presbytery; if not he must return to the plough or loom, and forever after hold his peace. *Lastly*. "It is resolved, That all persons ordained according to this directory, shall be *forever* reputed and taken, to all intents and purposes, for lawfully and sufficiently authorized ministers of the church of England, and as capable of any ministerial employment in the church, as any other presbyter already ordained or hereafter to be ordained." So this point is made orthodox and of divine authority.

The Independents maintained the right of every particular congregation to ordain its own officers. This was debated ten days. The arguments on both sides were afterwards published in a book titled "*The Grand Debate between Presbytery and Independency*." At length the question was put, "that it is requisite no single congregation that can conveniently associate with others, should assume to itself the sole right of ordination." It was voted in the affirmative. The following distinguished ministers entered their dissent:—Thomas Goodwine, Philip Nye, Jeremiah Burrows, S. Simpson, W. Bridge, W. Greenhill and W. Carter. The majority, however, ruled, and in such cases always regulates the conscience and decides what is divine. For the voice of the majority is the voice of God.

"It was next debated whether ordination might precede election to a particular cure or charge." That is, whether a man might be married without a wife, and afterwards take whom he could get by virtue of his marriage, or whether a man might be appointed to a charge without having any. This could not be fairly carried, and was compromised with the Independents, who agreed to the imposition of hands in the ceremony of ordination, "provided that it was attended with an open declaration that it was not intended as a conveyance of office power."

A debate of thirty days was held in the assembly on this proposition, "that the scripture holds forth that many particular congregations may, and BY DIVINE AUTHORITY OUGHT to be under one pres-

byterial government." The Erastians would not except against the presbyterial government as a political institution, but opposed the claim of divine right. But the Independents opposed the whole proposition and advanced a counter divine right of independency. Fifteen days they took the part of opponents, and fifteen days they were upon the defensive.

The chief inquiries were concerning the constitution and form of the first church of Jerusalem, the subordination of synods and of lay elders. The Independents maintained that the church of Jerusalem was *one* congregation; the Presbyterians affirmed that there were many congregations in this city under one presbytery. The ablest critics in the assembly, such as Dr. Temple, Selden, Lightfoot, Coleman, Vines, &c., were divided upon this head, but it was carried for the Presbyterians. The Jewish Sanhedrim was proposed in the assembly as a model for their Christian presbytery, and great skill in the Jewish antiquities was exhibited in this part of the debate in settling what were the respective powers of the ecclesiastical and civil courts under the law.

As the reader, not acquainted with the origin of the present religious institutions, will be curious to know how the lay elders or ruling elders, got into existence, we shall, while noticing these proceedings of the assembly, just remark, that while they were inquiring into the constitution of the Jewish Sanhedrim and defining its ecclesiastical and civil powers, it was remarked that "Moses appointed that he that should not hearken to the priest or the judge should die." Deut. xvii. 12. It was inferred in favor of church power that the priest held one court and the civil magistrate another. But Mr. Selden observed that the Vulgate Latin, until within these 40 years, read thus, *Qui non obedierit sacerdoti ex decreto judicis morietur*. "He that will not obey the priest shall die by the sentence of the judge." Mr. Lightfoot added, that when the judges of inferior courts went up to Jerusalem by way of appeal, it was only for advice and consultation. But when the question was put for a subordination of synods and lay elders, as so many courts of judicature, with power to dispense church censures, it was carried in the affirmative, and asserted in their humble advice to parliament, with this addition, "So Christ has furnished some in his churches besides ministers of the word, with gifts for government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereto, who are to join with the minister in the government of the church, which officers the reformed churches generally call elders." Hence their name, authority, and office.

When this point was carried by a large majority, the Independents entered their dissent in writing, and complained to the world of "the unkind usage they met with in the assembly; that the papers they offered were not read, and that they were not allowed to state their own questions, being told they set themselves industriously to puzzle the cause and render the clearest propositions obscure, rather than argue the truth or falseness of them; that it was not worth the assembly's while to spend so much time in debating with so inconsiderable a number of men." They also declared that "the assembly refused to debate their main proposition, viz. Whether a divine right of church government did not remain with every particular congregation." To all which, says Mr. Neal, it was replied that the assembly were not conscious they had done them any injustice; and as for the rest, they were the

\* Neal's History vol. 3, p. 181.

proper judges of their own methods of proceeding. So these matters were carried in the Westminster Assembly. But the Erastians reserved themselves for the House of Commons, where they were sure to be joined in opposing these decisions of the assembly by all the patrons of the Independents. For it mattered not what was decided by the assembly—it was neither divine nor orthodox until sanctioned by the parliament. The English and Scots commissioners were very solicitous about the fate of this dogma of the divines in the House of Commons, and were determined to carry the point by stratagem. The scheme was, to carry the question before the house should be full. "They gave their friends notice to be early in their places; but Mr. Glyn, perceiving their intentions, spoke an hour to the point of *jus divinum*; and after him Mr. Whitelocke stood up and enlarged upon the same argument till the house was full; when the question being put, it was carried in the negative, and that the proposition of the assembly should stand thus, *that it is lawful and agreeable to the word of God, that the church be governed by congregational, classical, and synodical assemblies.*"

Because the House of Commons would not go the whole length with the Assembly in establishing the *jus divinum* of presbytery, the Scots commissioners and the high Presbyterians in England alarmed the citizens with the danger of the church, and prevailed with the common council to petition the parliament (November 15) "that the Presbyterian discipline shall be established as the discipline of Jesus Christ." But the commons answered with a frown. Not yet discouraged, they prevailed with the city ministers to petition, who, when they came to the house, were told by the Speaker they "need not wait for an answer, but go home and look to the charge of their congregation."

"The Presbyterian ministers, despairing of success with the Commons, instead of yielding to the times, resolved to apply to the House of Lords, who received them civilly and promised to take their request into consideration; but no advances were made for two months, and they became impatient, and determined to renew their application; and to give it the greater weight prevailed with the lord mayor and court of aldermen to join them in presenting an address, which they did June 16—"for a speedy settlement of church government according to the covenant, and that no toleration might be given to popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, profaneness, or any thing contrary to sound doctrine, and that all private assemblies might be restrained." But it was all in vain. The House of Lords and the House of Commons would not be moved by their disagreeable importunity. "However, adds Mr. Neal, this laid the foundation of those jealousies and misunderstandings between the city and parliament, which in the end proved the ruin of the Presbyterian cause."

The next and fiercest controversy between the parliament and the assembly was upon the power of the keys. But upon this we cannot now speak particularly.

From the preceding details of facts we may easily discover the spirit of the founders of Presbyterianism, and what sort of times we would have had could they have obtained their wishes. But there was more moderation and benevolence in the army and the parliament than in all the high-toned clergy of that day. And yet the parliament was priest-ridden down to no ordinary degree of servility to the superstition of those times. EDITOR.

\* Neal's History, vol. 3, p. 290.

### *A Restoration of the Ancient order of Things.* No. VII.

#### On the Breaking of Bread—No. II.

THE apostles were commissioned by the Lord to teach the disciples to observe all things he had commanded them. Now we believe them to have been faithful to their master, and consequently he gave them to know his will. Whatever the disciples practised in their meetings with the approbation of the apostles, is equivalent to an apostolic command to us to do the same. To suppose the contrary, is to make the half of the New Testament of non-effect. For it does not altogether consist of commands, but of approved precedents. Apostolic example is justly esteemed of equal authority with an apostolic precept. Hence, say the Baptists, shew us where Paul or any apostle sprinkled an infant, and we will not ask you for a command to go and do likewise. It is no derogation from the authority for observing the first day of the week, to admit that christians are no where in this volume commanded to observe it. We are told that the disciples, with the countenance and presence of the apostles, met for worship on this day. And so long as we believe they were honest men, and taught all that was commanded them, so long we must admit that the Lord commanded it to be so done. For if they allowed, and by their presence authorized, the disciples to meet religiously on the first day, without any authority from their King, there is no confidence to be placed in them in other matters. Then it follows that they instituted a system of will-worship, and made themselves lords instead of servants. But the thought is inadmissible, consequently the order of worship they gave the churches was given them by their Lord, and their example is of the same force with a broad precept.

"But we come directly to the ordinance of breaking bread, and to open the New Testament on this subject, we see (Matt. xxvi. 26.) that the Lord instituted bread and wine on a certain occasion, as emblematic of his body and of his blood, and as such, commanded his disciples to eat and drink them. This was done without any injunction as to the time when, or the place where, this was to be afterwards observed. Thus the four gospels, or the writings of Matthew, Mark, and John leave it. At this time the apostles were not fully instructed in the laws of his kingdom; and so they continued till he ascended up to his Father and sent them the Holy Spirit. After Pentecost, and the accession gained that day, the apostles proceeded to organize a congregation of disciples, and to set them in the order which the Lord had commanded and taught them by his Spirit. The historian tells us minutely that after they had baptized and received into their society three thousand souls, they continued steadfastly in a certain order of worship and edification. Now this congregation was intended to be a model, and did actually become such to Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. The question then is, What order of worship and of edification did the apostle give to the first congregation they organized? This must be learned from the narrative of the historian who records what they did. We shall now hear his testimony, (Acts ii. 41.) "Then they who had gladly received his word were baptized, and about three thousand were that day added to them: and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in the fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Other things are recorded of this congregation distinct from those cited, such as their having a community



of goods, and for this purpose selling their possessions of houses and lands. But these are as peculiar to them and as distinct from the instituted order of worship, as was the case of Ananias and his wife Sapphira. Their being constantly in the Temple is also added as a peculiarity in their history. But it may be correctly inquired, How are we to distinguish between those things which are as peculiar to them as their vicinity to the Temple, and those things which were common to them with other christian congregations? This must be determined by a comparison of the practice of other congregations as recorded by the same historian, or as found in the letters to the churches written by the apostles. From these we see that no other christian congregation held a community of goods; no other sold their possessions as a necessary part of christian religion; no others met constantly in the Temple. Indeed, Luke, from his manner of relating the order of worship and means of edification practised by this congregation, evidently distinguishes what was essential from what was circumstantial. For after informing us, verses 41 and 42, of the distinct parts or acts of their social worship, he adds in a separate and detached paragraph the history of their peculiarities. "Now," adds he, "all they who believed were together and had all things in common, and they sold their possessions and goods," &c. This, too, is separated from the account of their social acts of worship by a statement of other circumstances, such as the fear that fell upon every soul, and the many wonders and signs which were done by the apostles. From a minute attention to the method of the historian, and from an examination of the historical notices of other congregations, it is easy to distinguish between what was their order of worship and manner of edification from what was circumstantial. And, indeed, their whole example is binding on all christians placed in circumstances similar to those in which they lived at that time. For though the selling of their possessions is mentioned as a part of the benevolent influences of the christian religion clearly understood and cordially embraced, as a voluntary act suggested by the circumstances of the times and of their brethren; yet were a society of christians absolutely so poor that they could live in no other way than by the selling of the possessions of some of the brethren, it would be an indispensable duty to do so, in imitation of him who, though he was rich, made himself poor, that the poor, though his impoverishing himself, might be made rich. But still it must be remarked that even in Jerusalem at this time the selling of houses and lands was a voluntary act of such disciples as were possessors of them, without any command from the apostles to do so. This is most apparent from the speech of Peter addressed to Ananias and his wife; who seem to have been actuated by a false ambition, or love of praise, in pretending to as high an exhibition of self denial and brotherly love as some others. Their sin was not in not selling their property, nor was it in only contributing a part; but it was in lying, and pretending to give the whole, when only a part was communicated. That they were under no obligation from any law or command to sell their property, Peter avows in addressing them, and for the purpose too of inculcating them more and more: "While it remained," says he, "was it not yours? It was still at your own disposal." You might give or withhold without sin. But the lie proved their ruin. Thus it is easy to discover what was essential to their worship and edification from what was circumstantial.

Their being baptized when they gladly received the word, was not a circumstance, neither was their continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. This the order of all the congregations gathered and organized by the apostles, shows. With regard to our present purpose, enough is said on this testimony, when it is distinctly remarked and remembered that the first congregation organized after Pentecost by the apostles, now gifted with the Holy Spirit, CONTINUED AS STEADFASTLY IN BREAKING OF BREAD as in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, or prayers. This is indisputably plain from the narrative, and it is all we want to adduce from it at present. It is bad logic to draw more from the premises than what is contained in them; and we can most scripturally and logically conclude from these premises, that the congregation of disciples in Jerusalem did as steadfastly, and as uniformly in their meetings, attend on the breaking of bread, as upon any other mean of edification or act of worship. It cannot, however, be shown from this passage how often that was, nor is it necessary for us to do so in this place. We shall find other evidences that will be express to this point. We dismiss this passage in the mean time, by repeating that the first congregation organized by the apostles after the ascension of the King, did as steadfastly attend on the breaking of bread in their religious meetings, as upon any act of worship or means of edification.

We shall again hear Luke narrating the practice of the disciples at Troas, (*Acts xx. 7.*) "And on the first day of the week, when the disciples assembled to break bread, Paul, being about to depart on the morrow, discoursed with them, and lengthened out his discourse till midnight." From the manner in which this meeting of the disciples at Troas is mentioned by the historian, two things are very obvious: 1st. That it was an established custom or rule for the disciples to meet on the first day of the week. 2d. That the primary object of their meeting was to break bread. They who object to breaking bread on every first day of the week when the disciples are assembled, usually preface their objections by telling us that Luke does not say they broke bread every first day; and yet they contend against the Sabbatarians that they ought to observe every first day to the Lord in commemoration of his resurrection. The Sabbatarians raise the same objection to this passage when adduced by all professors of christianity to authorize the weekly observance of the first day. They say that Luke does not tell us that they met for any religious purpose on every first day. How inconsistent, then, are they who make this sentence an express precedent for observing every first day, when arguing against the Sabbatarians, and then turn round and tell us that it will not prove that they broke bread every first day! If it does not prove the one, it is most obvious it will not prove the other; for the weekly observance of this day, as a day of the meeting of the disciples, and the weekly breaking of bread in those meetings, stand or fall together. Hear it again: "And on the first day of the week, when the disciples assembled to break bread." Now all must confess, who regard the meaning of words, that the meeting of the disciples and the breaking of bread, as far as these words are concerned, are expressed in the same terms as respects the frequency. If the one were fifty-two times in a year, or only once, so was the other. If they met every first day, they brake bread every first day; and if they did not break bread every first day, they did not meet every first

day. But we argue from the style of Luke, or from his manner of narrating the fact, that they did both. If he had said that on a first day the disciples assembled to break bread, then I would admit that both the Sabbatarians and the semi-annual or septennial communicants might find some way of explaining this evidence away.

The definite article is, in the Greek and in the English tongue, prefixed to stated and fixed times, and its appearance here is not merely definitive of one day, but expressive of a stated or fixed day. This is so in all languages which have a definite article. Let us illustrate this by a very parallel and plain case. Suppose some five hundred or a thousand years hence, the annual observance of the 4th of July should have ceased for several centuries, and that some person or persons devoted to the primitive institutions of this mighty republic, were desirous of seeing every fourth of July observed as did the fathers and founders of the republic, during the hale and undegenerate days of primitive republican simplicity. Suppose that none of the records of the first century of this republic had expressly stated that it was a regular and fixed custom for a certain class of citizens to pay a particular regard to every fourth day of July—but that a few incidental expressions in the biography of the leading men in the republic spake of it as Luke has done of the meeting at Troas. How would it be managed? For instance, in the life of John Q. Adams, it is written, A. D. 1823, "And on the fourth day of July, when the republicans at the city of Washington met to dine, John Q. Adams delivered an oration to them." Would not an American a thousand years hence, in circumstances such as have been stated, find in these words one evidence that it was an established usage during the first century of this republic to regard the fourth day of July as aforesaid. He would tell his opponents to mark that it was not said that on a fourth of July, as if it were a particular occurrence, but it was in the fixed meaning of the English language expressive of a fixed and stated day of peculiar observance. At all events he could not fail in convincing the most stupid that the primary intention of that meeting was to dine. Whatever might be the frequency or the intention of that dinner, it must be confessed, from the words above cited, that they met to dine.

Another circumstance that must somewhat confound the Sabbatarians and the lawless observers of breaking of bread, may be easily gathered from Luke's narrative. Paul and his company arrived at Troas either on the evening of the first day, or on Monday morning at an early hour; for he departed on Monday morning, as we term it, at an early hour; and we are positively told that he tarried just seven days at Troas. Now had the disciples been Sabbatarians or observed the seventh day as a Sabbath, and broke bread on it as the Sabbatarians do, they would not have deferred their meeting till the first day, and kept Paul and his company waiting, as he was evidently in a great haste at this time. But his tarrying seven days, and his early departure on Monday morning, corroborates the evidence adduced in proof that the first day of the week was the fixed and stated day for the disciples to meet for this purpose.

From the 2d of the Acts, then, we learn that the breaking of bread was a stated part of the worship of the disciples in their meetings; and from the 20th we learn that the first day of the week was the stated time for those meetings; and, above all, we ought to notice that the most prominent object of their meeting was to break bread.

But this, we hope, will be made still more evident in our next.

EDITOR.

#### Public Notice.

I, EZRA STILES ELI, stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, do hereby certify to all whom it may concern, that said Assembly having resolved to establish a *Western Theological Seminary*, did on the 30th day of May last, appoint Major Gen. ANDREW JACKSON, of Tennessee; Hon. BENJAMIN MILLS, of Paris, Kentucky; Hon. JOHN THOMPSON, of Chillicothe, Ohio; Rev. OBADIAH JENNINGS, of Washington, Pa. Rev. ANDREW WYLLIE, of Washington College, in Pa.

to be commissioners of the assembly to examine carefully the several sites which may be proposed for the contemplated seminary, as to the healthiness of the place and regions where these sites may be found, as to the amount of pecuniary aid and other property which may be obtained from the inhabitants of these sites and their vicinity severally, in establishing the contemplated seminary, and as to all other circumstances and considerations which ought to have influence in deciding on the location of the seminary. These commissioners are to report to the board of directors of the Western Theological Seminary, the proposals that have been made to them, and their opinion of the whole subject of the seminary, that the said board after considering the report of the commissioners, may recommend to the next general assembly the most suitable place, in their judgment, for the establishment of the Western Theological Seminary.

Of these commissioners Gen. Andrew Jackson is chairman; and they, as well as the directors, are appointed first to meet at Chillicothe, Ohio, on the third Friday of July, at 2 o'clock P. M. and subsequently on their own adjournments.

The agents appointed by the assembly to solicit and receive donations for the Western Theological Seminary, are the Rev. James Hogue, Rev. David Monfort, of Millville, Hamilton county, Ohio; Rev. James Culbertson, Rev. Thomas Barr, of Wooster, Ohio; Rev. William Wylie, Rev. Elisha P. Swift, and Rev. Obadiah Jennings.

This publication is made that due notice of their appointment may reach the commissioners, directors, and agents, even should they fail of receiving the written circular of the subscriber; and that literary corporations and enterprising individuals in the flourishing western towns, may have an early opportunity of making proposals to some one of the commissioners above named concerning the location of the seminary.

Those printers in the South and West who will give this notice a gratuitous insertion in their papers, will confer a favor on the Presbyterian church.

By order of the General Assembly.

EZRA S. ELI.

WHEN the following Public Notice is read, it will appear that the General Assembly of 1825 yet possesses in an eminent degree the primitive evangelical, and apostolic spirit of the first laborers in planting christianity in the Roman empire. How this precious relique escaped the ravages of Vandalism and the reign of Night, in the ages of undisturbed superstition, is left to the conjectures of the reader.

#### PUBLIC NOTICE.

I, SIMON PETER, an apostle and stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church of the Western Roman Empire, do hereby cer-



tify to all whom it may concern, That said assembly having resolved to establish a Western Theological Seminary, did, on the ides of May last, appoint

Major General CLAUDIUS CAESAR, commander in chief of the army of invasion into Britain;

Hon. JULIUS AGRICOLA, of South Britain;

Hon. QUINTUS CURTIUS, of Rome;

Rev. SENECA, of Spain, the true moralist;

Rev. MAECENAS, son of the patron of Horace—to be commissioners of the assembly to examine carefully the several sites which may be proposed for the contemplated seminary, as to the healthiness of those sites, as to the amount of the mammon of unrighteousness and other means which may be obtained from the inhabitants of those sites, in establishing said fountain of grace in their vicinity. These commissioners are to report to the Rev. Matthew Levi, Johannes Markus, Saulus Paulus, D. D. and the other directors of the Western Theological Seminary, the proposals that shall have been made to them, and their opinions on the same.

Of these commissioners, Gen. Claudius Cesar, because he has been a celebrated duellist and warrior, and has no children, is chairman, and particularly qualified to take the command in a cabinet of clergy, as in a council of war; and they, as well as the directors, are to meet at Damascus on the first of the ides of July, at the 8th hour of the day, and subsequently on their own adjournments.

The agents to solicit and receive donations for the Western Roman Theological Gentile Seminary, are, the Rev. Mr. Simon Magus, Rev. Mr. Tertullus, Rev. J. Sergius, Rev. T. Timothy, Rev. T. Titus, Rev. O. Agabus.

It is hoped that the friends of religion in the flourishing towns of the Western Roman Empire will contribute spiritedly on this occasion to a western source of life, as they have done in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, to the Eastern.

Those scribes and heralds in the South and West, who will publish this notice without any mammon in return for it, as we are very scarce of the images of Augustus, will confer a favor on the Presbyterian church, for which its head will reward them in Paradise.

By order of the General Assembly,  
SIMON PETER, Stated Clerk.

*"The Presbytery of Onondaga.*

"DEEPLY affected with the deplorable situation to which the children of the professed people of God have been reduced by a neglect of religious instruction, and the ignorance in which they have been kept of the privileges of their birthright, secured to them by divine constitution—do most earnestly and solemnly recommend to the churches a careful and prayerful observance of the following RULES:—

1. That every professing parent, guardian, or master of a family, observe the duty of instructing his household in the great doctrines of our holy religion, of inculcating on their minds the obligations they are under to God, and the covenant relation they stand in to him: taking for a general text-book of instruction, the Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines.

2. That such parents, guardians, or masters, commit their household to the instructions of the church, and bring them, or cause them to be brought, to such place or places of instruction as the regular authority of the church may from time to time appoint.

3. That each church within the bounds of this presbytery appoint certain judicious and pious

male members of the church as catechists, to go from house to house, and confer with professing christians and their households on the importance of instructing children in the principles of religion, and to appoint certain places where the children of a particular neighborhood or section of the congregation, may, at stated times, meet for the purpose of receiving instruction from such Catechists.

4. That the ministers and elders, or other authority of the churches, call a general meeting of all the children of the church, quarter-yearly, for the purpose of furnishing them such religious and moral instruction, as their several circumstances, on an examination of their views and feelings, shall appear to require.

5. That every church hold all the children of the church, under twelve years old, responsible to the church for their future conduct; that the church never afterwards relinquish their inspection and discipline; that such children hereafter stand on the same ground, submit to the same salutary correction for their reformation and repentance, or the same sentence of exclusion to which the other members are subject, and that the names of all such children be added to the catalogue of members now enrolled as constituting the church. It being understood, at the same time, that they shall profess their faith, in order to a participation of the Lord's Supper.

6. That each church collect all other baptized persons, who have hitherto been non-communicants, and who will assemble at the call of the church, and ascertain who among them are now willing to be responsible to the church, to stand in their lot in the kingdom of Christ, and publicly profess their attachment to him and the doctrines contained in the Assembly's catechism; and, in fine, to view themselves, and be treated by the church, as ever afterwards members. And that all such persons be also added to the catalogue of members composing the church.

7. That all minors who shall hereafter be baptized, be immediately enrolled with the church, considered as members, and treated accordingly.

8. That when parents from abroad come and are received into our churches, their children, under twelve years of age, be received and enrolled as members with them.

Done in Presbytery, at Homer, Dec. 31, 1812.

DIRCK C. LANSING, Moderator.

JABEZ CHADWICK, Clerk."

AN excellent plan, truly, to make and confirm Presbyterians, but not *Christians*. These rules expressly avow principles of these sectaries which but few of their leaders at this time are willing openly and explicitly to declare—such as,

1st. Not the Holy Scriptures, but the Westminster catechism, is the "text-book" for the religious instruction of the offspring and households of Presbyterians. Thus the understanding, and consequently the conscience of those youths are biassed and moulded into the Presbyterian form.

2d. That all the children, under 12 years old, born of the flesh, are to be enrolled as members of the church, and to be held responsible to the church, faith or no faith.

3d. That those children of the flesh are to be accounted as the seed, and to be the subjects of church discipline, of correction and exclusion, as other members; yet precluded from the privileges of the senior members.

4th. But it is avowed that of these under twelve-year-old members, only a part shall be communicants; and the other part, though equally members, are not to be communicants.

5th. That all other baptized persons, whether under or over twelve years old, who are non-communicants, be collected and interrogated whether they will stand in their lot in the kingdom of Christ, avows that those non-communicants have a place or lot in this kingdom, whether christian or infidel. A worldly and carnal kingdom, truly!

6th. That all baptized minors are considered as members, and forthwith to be treated as such.

#### QUERIES.

1. Why not enrol them as members at the age of ten days or ten years?

2. What course of discipline is to be practised on three-month or on three-year-old members; for these are members under twelve, and to be disciplined by these canons?

3. Whether is it their birth or baptism that makes these babes and minors members of the Presbyterian church?

4. If their birth make them members, why baptize them, seeing members of the church are not to be baptized? Or if baptism make them members, why compare it to circumcision, for circumcision did not make members of Abraham's family?

5. Can one code of laws suit a church of three sorts of members—speechless babes, unregenerated minors, and regenerated adults?

In what a miserable condition is that church which is under such lawgivers as the Onondaga Presbytery!!

6. Who placed them on thrones to give laws to any society calling itself the kingdom of Christ?

7. Does not the passing of such laws declare that the New Testament is silent on such things?

8. Ought they not to read Revelation xxii. 13. and tremble?

ED. C. B.

#### To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.

DEAR BROTHER,—WHILST your worthy friend and correspondent, "P. H." is puzzling his brain with some of those many difficulties originating in scholastic theology and science, falsely so called; I am equally concerned in trying to ascertain what method to pursue in order to introduce "the ancient order of things" amongst churches called churches of Christ. And as you are undoubtedly an advocate for this reform, and possessing more information than myself, I take the liberty of asking for some instructions. But before I proceed to any specifications, I wish to make known to you that my case is somewhat singular; and, as such, shall give you a short sketch, which, perhaps, may answer some good purpose, especially should this ever meet the public eye.

I have been for a considerable number of years what we call a preacher of the Gospel, and have been solemnly ordained to that office by men of the highest respectability in my order. I have itinerated much through the country, and have honestly endeavored to recommend the religion of Jesus Christ to my ignorant and perishing countrymen, and in doing of which (if I am a proper judge) I have gained considerable applause, and have been looked upon as a promising young man. During this state of things my vanity has often been flattered; and had it not been for one serious difficulty with which I had to grapple, it is uncertain to what a degree of self-importance I might have arrived—and that was, whether I was really called by God to the work of the ministry; for my teachers had caused me to believe that there was a special call for the ministry, differing from that call which was

necessary in order to make men christians. After laboring under this difficulty for many years, and still unable to ascertain whether I was really called or not, I made an exertion of mind and discovered that it could not be wrong in any man to recommend that religion which was ordered to be published, call or no call; and so I acted, and felt considerably relieved from my most serious difficulty. This was my situation when I first saw your views on that subject in the *Christian Baptist*; and no sooner had I read them and compared them with the word of God, than I abandoned entirely, what I had before partially, and am made now to wonder why the christian world could have been kept in ignorance so long, an ignorance too which is fraught with so much distress to an honest-minded christian. Having given up my former views relative to the call, I now only esteem myself a christian, as one who has obtained like precious faith with all saints; and in consequence of this hope of eternal life, I now, from a principle of gratitude to God for his goodness to me, wish still to recommend that religion to all men, which is the source of all my substantial joys—

"Nor can I willing be his bounty to conceal

"From others, who, like me, their wants and hunger feel.

"I'll tell them of his bounteous store,

"And try to send a thousand more."

Although I am satisfied on the subject above touched, still I have cause of great and increasing distress in consequence of viewing the state of the churches, as being yet in the wilderness, and bearing so little likeness to their ancient simplicity and glory. For this restoration I ardently pray; but I am greatly at a loss to know how to make a move, seeing the prejudices with which we will have to contend. It is an easy matter for you, my brother, to theorize on this subject, but how to reduce it to practice, I have not yet found; and this is the subject on which I ask advice. For sure if we do not go to work right, we shall not prosper—we shall only be making bad worse. My inquiry more particularly respects the churches that are already in existence, and whether they can be reformed without creating additional difficulties and distresses. Your answer to the above inquiry (should you give one) will be read with avidity.

Hoping you may prosper in your inquiry after truth, I subscribe myself

Your brother in Christ,  
FAITHFUL.

#### Reply to Faithful.

Dear Brother,

THE difficulties which you mention in your epistle of July last are apparently great, and in some respects, no doubt, really so. The things that happened to the Jews, once the people of God, happened to them for types or examples, and they are written for our admonition, to whom the grace of God has appeared, and upon whom the ends of the world have come. They apostatized from the divine institution given by Moses; they lost the primitive simplicity and excellency of the Jews' religion, and departed far from both the letter and spirit of the covenant under which God placed them. They were carried captive into Babylon for their iniquities, and while in Babylon they lost the primitive meaning of the sacred language, the medium of the revelation made them; and thus both the law and the worship under it were not exhibited among them. While in Babylon their condition became worse and worse. It pleased the God of Abraham to turn the captivity of Jacob. But



the dangers and difficulties that attended their return were great and appalling. To restore the ancient order of things then was a work of no small difficulty. They had lost a living model of the Lord's house; they were ignorant of the manner in which the religious festivals and institutions were to be observed; they had formed many alliances that were difficult to be broken; and, worse than all, they had lost the true meaning of their apostles and prophets. Now, so similar has been the apostacy from the new covenant, that almost all the same misfortunes attend it, and the same names are, in the new covenant prophecies, attached to it. To complete the analogy, and to make it a type of that which it doubtless circumstantially represented, we may expect to find the same difficulties attendant on a return to Jerusalem, and a restoration of the divinely authorized institutions of the new covenant. Some of the professing people of God will now, as formerly, oppose a return; many will despair of its practicability; a living model of the house of God is wanting; and the sacred dialect has been so much perverted, and is so generally misunderstood, that but few of even those who feel the thralldom of the captivity of Babylon the Great, know whence they are fallen, and of what things they should repent.

To make a move in the business of restoration, and in returning to the covenant, is, I confess, quite a different thing from speculating or talking about it; and yet it only requires an intelligent mind and a willing heart. These will direct and embolden every effort. The people must abandon the language, customs, and manners of Ashdod. For this purpose they will meet, and read, and examine the New Covenant writings. They will also look to Heaven for wisdom and courage, and as soon as any item of the will of Heaven is distinctly apprehended, it will be brought into their practice. But, my dear sir, personal reformation, or individual conformity to the spirit, and temper, and morals of christians, must be the basis of every attempt at a social or united representation and enjoyment of the christian religion. This personal reformation will, however, grow with, and be accelerated by, a social and united effort to understand and practise the apostolic instructions. These cannot be separated. It is admitted the form of godliness in individuals and in societies may exist without the power; and a congregation may, like a well-disciplined army, be clothed with all the regimentals, and perform all the involutions and evolutions to an *iota*, and yet not a soldier among them—not a christian in spirit and temper—in life and deportment.

But this is more likely to be the case any where than amongst those who are daily and ardently cultivating a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and aiming at standing perfect and complete in the will of God. This course is a sovereign antidote against that state.

But to come to the pinching question in your communication, it must be observed that, amongst the congregations with which you are connected, there is found this happy circumstance—they have taken the scriptures of the New Testament for their constitution. Perhaps some of them have made their obeisance to something called the Constitution of the Elkhorn or Licking Association, or to something surnamed after the fish ponds or mill seats of your country; but these are such modern playthings they can very easily be drowned in the waters that christened them. But in all those congregations

Y

which have recognized that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and not composed of all born into the world by natural generation, methinks it were easy, if the hearts of the people are regenerate, to have the ancient order of things restored.

As I have no dictatorial authority in these matters, and would by no means covet such; and, indeed, as nothing can be done but by the people themselves, examining, judging, and acting for themselves, I can only say, that all those desirous of knowing, enjoying, and exhibiting the christian religion in its original purity and excellency, must individually, and in their public meetings, search and examine the apostles' doctrine, and pay no manner of respect to any opinions or practices which they have formerly regarded, except so far as they see, and learn, and know them to be the teachings of the Holy Spirit. If they cannot get into this way of reading and examining the Holy Scriptures to their profit, let them begin and inquire into the reasons of their present conduct. It is easy to put them on the search, by proposing them a few questions to solve—such as, By what authority and for what reason do we meet once in a month or once in two weeks to hear a sermon? By what authority and for what reason do we agree with a man, called "a preacher," for the one fourth, or the one half, or the one third of his time to preach to us? By what authority and for what reason do we all forsake the assembling of ourselves together except when our preacher draws us out? By what authority and for what reason do we at one time attend on certain acts of worship in our assemblies, and not at another? or why have we ordinary and extraordinary acts of worship? Why should we not devote a part of the time employed in our meetings in inquiring into the grounds and reasons of our own acts and deeds, and in comparing our views, enjoyments, and practices, as christians, with those of them who first trusted in Christ? And why should we not, as soon as we discover any incongruity, deficiency, or aberration in our views or practices, immediately abandon them, and become followers of them who among the Jews and Gentiles, first turned to the Lord?

My dear sir, I think by the time these matters are ascertained, the views and dispositions of all who fear God will be considerably improved; and, as the best solution of these difficulties, we intend to give the history of the progress and proficiency of some congregations who have taken this course, and are now enjoying a participation of the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ. It will not be surprising to find some members of your best regulated churches who will rather walk as other professors walk, than in the paths consecrated by the authority of the Lord and the examples of his first followers. Thus the chaff will be purged from among the wheat; and the disciple in deed will be distinguished from him who has merely the name.

With prayers for your success in the noblest of all attempts, I am your brother in the hope of immortality.

EDITOR.

No. 3.]

Oct. 3, 1825.

*A Narrative of the Origin and Formation of the Westminster or Presbyterian Confession of Faith.*

No. V.

It would be tedious, though, perhaps, very profitable to go into the detail of the acts and deeds of the Westminster Assembly, and those proceedings of the long parliament connected

with the call and session of those creed makers. An assembly which sat five years six months and twenty two days, in which they had one thousand one hundred and sixty three sessions, must have done a great deal of ecclesiastical business, right or wrong. Their deeds will appear to posterity either good or evil, according to the medium through which they are viewed. If viewed through the medium of the popular and fashionable systems of this age, a majority of their acts will appear good and commendable to those who are their children; but if viewed through the medium of the twelve apostles, by those who venerate their character and authority, their deeds will appear every way out of character, and worthy of the severest reprobation. It is a very slim commendation of them to allow that they declared many truths in their confession; for so did the council of Trent and the council of Nice.

After they had spent the above term of five years six months and twenty two days, in creed and discipline manufacturing, those who yet kept their seats were converted into examining committees. After making the laws of conscience and conduct, they became examiners of such ministers as presented themselves for ordination or induction into livings. In the form of examining committees they might have sat till their last breath, had not Oliver Cromwell, on the morning of March 25, 1652, turned the long parliament out of doors, and thus being deprived of their patron, preserver, proprietor, benefactor, and guide, they broke up without any formal dissolution. *Sic transit gloria mundi*—and so may all the enemies of civil and religious liberty, all usurpers of the thrones and authority of the Lord and the apostles, whether intentionally or unintentionally such—so let them be dispersed! Let their language be confounded, and "confusion on their banners wait!"

They did not like their own establishment when they had it built. There was not enough of the dungeon and the sword in it. This will appear in the sequel.

That our remarks may appear just, if they do not already from the facts exhibited, we shall, in this number, give an extract or two from the history of their contest about the keys. Those who would wish to have a full statement of their proceedings would do well to consult Rushworth's, and Whitlocke's Memoirs, or Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. 3. The following hints will be found in Neal's History, vol. 3. page 392—5.

"But the fiercest contention between the assembly and parliament arose upon the power of the keys, which the former had voted to be in the eldership or presbytery, in these words: 'The keys of the kingdom of heaven were committed to the officers of the church, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut the kingdom of heaven against the impenitent both by the word and censures, and to open it to the penitent by absolution; and to prevent the profanation of the holy sacrament by notorious and obstinate offenders, the said officers are to proceed by admonition, suspension from the sacrament of the Lord's supper for a season, and by excommunication from the church, according to the nature of the crime and demerit of the person;' all which power they claimed, not by the laws of the land, but *jure divino*, or by divine appointment.

The Independents claimed the like power for the brotherhood of every particular congregation, but

without any civil sanctions or penalties annexed; the Erastians were for laying the communion open, and referring all crimes to the civil magistrate. When the question therefore came under consideration, in the house of commons, the learned Mr. Selden delivered his opinion against all suspensions and excommunications, to this effect, "that for four thousand years there was no law to suspend persons from the religious exercises. Strangers, indeed, were kept from the passover, but they were pagans, and not of the Jewish religion. The question is not now for keeping away Pagans in times of christianity, but Protestants from Protestant worship. No divine can show, that there is any such command as this to suspend from the sacrament. No man is kept from the sacrament, *eo nomine*, because he is guilty of any sin, by the constitution of the reformed churches, or because he has not made satisfaction. Every man is a sinner, the difference is only that one is in private, and the other in public. *Dic ecclesia* in St. Matthew were the courts of law which then sat at Jerusalem. No man can show any excommunication till the popes Victor and Zephorinus (two hundred years after Christ) first began to use them upon private quarrels, whereby it appears that excommunication is a human invention, taken from the heathens."

Mr. Whitlocke spake on the same side of the question, and said, "The assembly of divines have petitioned and advised this house, that in every presbytery, or Presbyterian congregation, the pastors and ruling elders may have the power of excommunication, and of suspending such as they shall judge ignorant or scandalous. By pastors, I suppose they mean themselves, and others who are or may be preachers, and would be bishops or overseers of their congregations. By ruling elders they mean a select number of such in every congregation as shall be chosen for the execution of government and discipline therein. A pastor is one who is to feed his sheep; and if so, how improper must it be for such to desire to excommunicate any, or keep them from food; to forbid any to eat, or whomsoever they shall judge unworthy, when Christ has said, Take, eat and drink, you all of it, though Judas was one of them. But some have said, it is the duty of a shepherd, when he sees a sheep feeding upon that which will do him hurt, to chase him away from that pasture; and they apply this to suspending of those from the sacrament who they fear, by eating and drinking unworthily, may eat and drink their own damnation. But it ought to be observed, that it is not receiving the sacrament, but the unworthiness of the receiver, that brings destruction; and this cannot be within the reach of any but the person himself who alone can examine his own heart; nor can any one produce a commission for to be judge thereof. But it is said, that ruling elders are to be joined with the pastors; now in some country villages and congregations, perhaps they may not be very learned, and yet the authority given them is very great; the word *elders*, amongst the Hebrews, signified men of the greatest power and dignity; so it was amongst the Romans, whose senate was so called, from *senes*, elders. The highest title amongst the French, Spaniards, and Italians, *seigneur* and *signiori*, is but a corruption of the latin word *senior*, elder. The same may be observed in our English corporations, where the best and most substantial persons are called aldermen or eldermen. Thus the title of elders may be given to the chief men of every presbytery; but if the power of excom-



munication be given them, they may challenge the title of elders in the highest signification.

"Power is desired to be given to suspend from the sacrament two sorts of persons, the ignorant and scandalous; now it is possible, that they who are judged to be competent in one place may be deemed ignorant in another; however, to keep them from the ordinances is no way to improve their knowledge. Scandalous persons are likewise to be suspended; and this is to be left to the discretion of the pastors and ruling elders; but where have they such a commission? Scandalous sinners should be admonished to forsake their evil ways, and amend their lives; and how can this be done better, than by allowing them to hear good sermons, and partake of the holy ordinances? A man may be a good physician, though he never cuts off a member from his patient; and a church may be a good church, though no member of it has ever been cut off. I have heard many complaints of the jurisdiction of the prelates, who were but few; now in this ordinance there will be a great multiplication of spiritual men in the government, but I am of opinion, that where the temporal sword is sufficient for punishing of offences, there will be no need of this new discipline."

Though the parliament did not deem it prudent wholly to reject the ordinance for excommunication, because it had been the popular complaint in the late times, that pastors of churches had not power to keep unworthy communicants from the Lord's table; yet the speeches of these learned gentlemen made such an impression, that they resolved to render it ineffectual to all the purposes of church tyranny; accordingly they sent to the assembly to specify, in writing, what degree of knowledge in the christian religion were necessary to qualify a person for the communion? and what sort of scandal deserved suspension or excommunication? Which, after much controversy, they presented to the houses, who inserted them in the body of their ordinance for suspension from the Lord's supper, dated October 20, 1645, together with certain provisos of their own, which stripped the presbyteries of that power of the keys which they were reaching at:—

"Provided always, that if any person find himself aggrieved with the proceedings of the presbytery to which he belongs, he may appeal to the ecclesiastical eldership; from them to the provincial assembly; from them to the national; and from them to the parliament."

"It is further provided, that the cognizance and examination of all capital offences shall be reserved entire to the magistrate appointed by the laws of the kingdom, who, upon his committing the party to prison, shall make a certificate to the eldership of the congregation to which they belonged, who may thereupon suspend them from the sacrament."

By these provisos it is evident the parliament were determined not to part with the spiritual sword, or subject their civil properties to the power of the church, which gave great offence to the Scots commissioners, and to most of the English Presbyterians, who declaimed against the ordinance, as built upon Erastian principles, and depriving the church of that which it claimed by a divine institution. The parliament observing their ambition of making the church independent of the state, girt the laws closer about them, and subjected their determinations more immediately to the civil magistrate, by an ordinance dated March 14th, 1645—6.

This ordinance of suspension from the sacra-

ment was extorted from the two houses before the time, by the importunate solicitations of the city clergy; for as yet there were no classes or Presbyteries in any part of England, which ought to have been erected before they had determined their powers. The houses had voted that there should be a choice of lay elders throughout England and Wales, and had laid down some rules for this purpose, August 19, 1645; but it was the 14th of March following before it passed into a law.

It was then ordained, "1. That there be forthwith a choice of [ruling] elders throughout the kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales.

"2. That public notice be given of such election in every parish, by the minister of the parish, a fortnight before; and that on the Lord's day on which the choice is to be made, a sermon be preached suitable to the occasion.

"3. Elections shall be made by the congregation, or the major part of them then assembled, being heads of families, and such as have taken the covenant."

The parliament apprehended they had now established the plan of the Presbyterian discipline, though it proved not to the satisfaction of any one party of christians; so hard is it to make a good settlement when men dig up all at once old foundations. The Presbyterian hierarchy was as narrow as the prelatical; and as it did not allow a liberty of conscience, claiming a civil as well as ecclesiastical authority over men's persons and properties, it was equally, if not more insufferable. Bishop Kennet observes that the settling presbytery was supported by the fear and love of the Scots army, and that when they were gone home it was better managed by the English army, who were for independency and a principle of toleration; but as things stood nobody was pleased; the Episcopalians and Independents were excluded; and because the parliament would not give the several presbyteries an absolute power over their communicants, but reserved the last appeal to themselves, neither the Scots nor English Presbyterians would accept it.

The English Presbyterians, having resolved to stand and fall with the Scots, refused peremptorily to comply with the ordinance, relying upon the assistance and support of that nation.

It was a sanguine and daring attempt of these divines, who were called together only for their advice, to examine and censure the ordinances of parliament, and dispute in this manner with their superiors; the commons, alarmed at this petition, appointed a committee to take into consideration the matter and manner of it; who, after some time, reported it as their opinion, that the assembly of divines, in their petition, had broken the privileges of parliament, and were guilty of a *præmunire*; and whereas they insisted so peremptorily on the *jus divinum* of the Presbyterian government, the committee had drawn up certain queries, which they desired the assembly might resolve for their satisfaction. The house agreed to the report of the committee and on the 30th of April, sent Sir John Evelin, Mr. Nathaniel Fiennes, and Mr. Browne, to the assembly, to acquaint them with their resolutions. These gentlemen set before them their rash and imprudent conduct, and in several speeches, showed wherein they had exceeded their province, which was to advise the houses in such points as they should lay before them, but not to dictate to those to whom they owed their being an assembly.

EDITOR.

*A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.*  
No. VIII.

On the Breaking of Bread.—No. III.

WE have proposed to make still farther apparent that the primary intention of the meeting of the disciples on the first day of the week, was to break bread. We concluded our last essay on this topic with a notice of Acts xx. 7. "And on the first day of the week when the disciples assembled to break bread." The design of this meeting, it is evident, was to break bread. But that this was the design of all their meetings for worship and edification, or that it was the primary object of the meetings of the disciples, is rendered very certain from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter xi. The apostle applauds and censures the church at Corinth with respect to their observance of the order he instituted among them. In the second verse he praises them for retaining the ordinances he delivered them, and in the conclusion of this chapter he censures them in strong terms for not keeping the ordinance of breaking bread as he delivered it to them. They retained in their meetings the ordinance, but did abuse it. He specifies their abuses of it, and denounces their practice as worthy of chastisement. But in doing this, he incidentally informs us that it was for the purpose of breaking bread they assembled in one place. And the manner in which he does this is equivalent to an express command to assemble for the purpose. Indeed there is no form of speech more determinate in its meaning or more energetic in its force than that which he uses, verse 20. It is precisely the same as the two following examples. A man assembles laborers in his vineyard to cultivate it. He goes out and finds them either idle or destroying his vines. He reproves and commands them to business by addressing them thus—"Men, ye did *not* assemble to cultivate my vineyard." By the use of this negative he makes his command more imperative and their guilt more apparent. A teacher assembles his pupils to learn—he comes in and finds them idle or quarrelling. He addresses them thus—"Boys, ye did *not* assemble to learn." In this forcible style, he declares the object of their meeting was to learn, and thus commands and reproves them in the same words. So Paul addresses the disciples in Corinth—"When ye assemble, it is *not* to eat the Lord's supper;" or (*Macknight*) "But your coming together into one place, is *not* to eat the Lord's supper," plainly and forcibly intimating that this was the design of their meeting or assembling in one place, commanding them to order, and reproving them for disorder. Now it must be admitted that Paul's style in this passage is exactly similar to the two examples given, and that the examples given mean what we have said of their import; consequently, by the same rule, Paul's reminds the Corinthians, and informs all who ever read the epistle, that when the disciples assembled, or came together into one place, it was primarily for the purpose of breaking bread, and in effect most positively commands the practice. To this it has been objected that the 26th verse allows the liberty of dispensing with this ordinance as often as we please. In the improved translation of Macknight it reads thus: "Wherefore, as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you openly publish the death of the Lord till the time he come." Either these words, or those in the preceding verse, ("This *do*, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me,") are said to give us the liberty of determining when we may break

bread. If so, then the Lord's supper is an anomaly in revelation. It is an ordinance which may be kept once in seven months, or seven years, just as we please, for, reader, remember, "where there is no law there is no transgression." But this application of the words is absurd, and perfectly similar to the papists' inference from these words; for they infer hence that "the cup may sometimes be omitted, and under this pretence have refused it altogether to the laity." And certainly if the phrase, "as often as you drink it," means that it may be omitted when any one pleases, it is good logic for the papists to argue that it may be omitted altogether by the laity, provided the priests *please* to drink it.

But neither the design of the apostle nor his words in this passage have respect to the frequency, but to the manner of observing the institution. If this is evident, that interpretation falls to the ground; and that it is evident, requires only to ask the question, What was the apostle's design in these words? Most certainly it was to reprove the Corinthians, not for the frequency nor unfrequency of their attending to it, but for the manner in which they did it. Now as this was the design, and as every writer's or speaker's words are to be interpreted according to his design, we are constrained to admit that the apostle meant no more than that christians should always, in observing this institution, observe it in the manner and for the reasons he assigns.

And last of all, on this passage, let it be remembered, that if the phrase, "as oft as," gives us liberty to observe it seldom, it also gives us liberty to observe it every day if we please.—And if it be a privilege, we are not straitened in the Lord, but in ourselves.

But, say some, "it will become too common and lose its solemnity." Well, then, the seldomer the better. If we observe it only once in twenty years, it will be the more uncommon and solemn. And, on the same principle, the seldomer we pray the better. We shall pray with more solemnity if we pray once in twenty years!

But "It is too expensive." How? Wherein? Is not the "earth the Lord's and the fulness thereof?" It costs us nothing. It is the Lord's property. He gives us his goods that we may enjoy ourselves. We never saw or read of a church so poor that could not, without a sacrifice, furnish the Lord's table. To make one "sacrament," requires more than to furnish the Lord's table three months. I hate this objection most cordially.—It is antichristian—it is mean—it is base.

"It is unfashionable." So it is to speak truth, and fulfil contracts. So it is to obey God rather than man. And if you love the fashion, be consistent—don't associate with the Nazarenes—hold up the skirts of the high priest, and go to the temple. But all objections are as light as straws and as volatile as a feather.

To recapitulate the items adduced in favor of the ancient order of breaking bread, it was shewn, as we apprehend—

1. That there is a divinely instituted order of christian worship, in christian assemblies.
2. That this order of worship is uniformly the same.
3. That the nature and design of the breaking of bread are such as to make it an essential part of christian worship in christian assemblies.
4. That the first church set in order in Jerusalem, continued as stedfastly in breaking of bread, as in any other act of social worship or edification.
5. That the disciples statedly met on the first



day of the week, primarily and emphatically for this purpose.

6. That the apostle declared it was the design or the primary object of the church to assemble in one place for this purpose, and so commanded it to the churches he had set in order.

7. That there is no law, rule, reason, or authority for the present manner of observing this institute quarterly, semi-annually, or at any other time than weekly.

8. We have considered some of the more prominent objections against the ancient practice, and are ready to hear any new ones that can be offered. Upon the whole, it may be said that we have express precedent and an express command to assemble in one place on the first day of the week to break bread. We shall reserve other evidences and considerations until some objections are offered by any correspondent who complies with our conditions. EDITOR.

#### *Christian Union.—No. III.*

Nothing can reconcile the different sects in religion to relinquish their sectarian names and creeds for the name of christian and the word of God, but a clear proof that their names and creeds are not only unscriptural, but are subversive of the christian character, and in their consequences prevent the world believing in Jesus Christ. In my two former numbers I have shown, in some degree, the truth of these things, and feel sure that every tender-hearted christian cannot fail to feel much affected by the considerations there exhibited.

I promised, in my last number, to give a short account of the origin of creeds as distinguished from the word of God in the gospel. This I do, the more effectually, to evince the deception that is practised upon the world and the delusion under which it labors on this subject.

The first creed of which we are informed, as distinguished from "the faith which was once delivered to the saints," is presented to us under the imposing but false title of "The Apostle's Creed," which is so often repeated by the Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians as of divine origin. Dupin, in his Ecclesiastical History of the first century, than whom a more correct and impartial historian has not lived, though of Catholic profession, makes it abundantly evident that this creed was not composed by the apostles. Saint Jerome says that the faith of the creed was an apostolic tradition, and was not written on paper by the apostles. "The fathers of the three first ages," Dupin observes, "disputing with heretics, do not pretend to say that the creed was composed by the apostles, but that the doctrine comprised in the creed is that of the apostles." "We find," he farther remarks, "in the second and third ages of the church as many creeds as authors, and the same author sets the creed down after a different manner in several places of his works, which plainly shows that there was not then any creed that was reputed to be the apostles, nor even any reputed or established form of faith except that which was written in the word of God. St. Jerome exhibits two different creeds, and Tertullian made use of three different creeds in three several places; all of which creeds are different from the Vulgate." So much for the origin of the first creed; which is rung upon all the changes so often every Sabbath by Catholics and Episcopalians as apostolic.

The next one which we shall notice, and which is the most distinguished instance of creed making in history, is the Nicene Creed,

which was made by and under the authority of Constantine the Great, in the year 325, and was established as the constitution and test of the true Catholic church, and the divine measure of all orthodoxy.

The history of this creed is the following. There were in the church of Alexandria, in Egypt, two pastors, one named Alexander, and the other Arius. Alexander, on a certain occasion, affirmed in reference to the Trinity, that there was "an unity in Trinity, and particularly that the Son was co-eternal, and co-substantial, and of the same dignity with the Father." Arius objected to the language, and urged that "If the Father begat the Son, he who was begotten must have a beginning of his existence as Son; and from hence, said he, it is manifest that there was a time when the Son was not," &c. This difference in speculation between these two men, neither of whom seems to have attended to the scriptural statements on the subject, involved all christendom in a flame and set bishops against bishops, who set the people together by the ears, and gave occasion, as Louates in his church history observes, to the heathen to ridicule the christian religion upon their public theatres. Julian, the nephew of Constantine, who, by reason of these disputes, renounced christianity and returned to Paganism, used to call into his presence the boxers on each side of the controversy, to abuse each other for his amusement.

The dispute between Alexander and Arius occasioned Constantine to call his Ecumenical Council—the council of the whole world, as it was called, to settle the orthodoxy on the subject, who decreed as follows:—"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things, visible and invisible; and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten, begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father," &c. This was the established creed, or the iron bedstead by which every man was to be measured, and to be lopped or stretched as he might be too long or too short, according to its dimensions. With its erection was forged "the infernal instruments of torture and death for effecting uniformity in religion," which were put into the hands of the clergy by civil authority. This occurred in A. D. 325, and was the first regular establishment of christianity by civil authority, and has been perpetuated down to the present time in the old world. At that time Constantine, though unbaptized, assumed the title of Universal Bishop. With this creed, and the power of punishing heretics, was exhibited the full revelation of the Man of Sin, and with it was established the kingdom of the clergy. See Jones' History of the Church, vol. 1. It was at this time, as Dupin remarks, that "bishops met together with liberty, being supported by the authority of princes, and made abundance of rules concerning the ordinances of the church. Previous to this the discipline was plain and simple, and the church had no other splendor to recommend it but what the holiness of the manners of the lives of the christians gave it."

Had the poor worms of the dust, Alexander and Arius and Athanasius, been let alone to enjoy their speculations, with a moderate attention to the word of God, their differences of opinion would either have done no harm, would have been healed, or would have died with them.

Jones, in his history, remarks, that "the effects of this general council were to lay the foundation

of a system of persecution of a complexion altogether new, professing christians tyrannizing over the consciences of each other, and inflicting tortures and cruelties far greater than they had sustained from their heathen persecutors." Each side of the Arian controversy, when in power, persecuted the other with the most ruthless sanguinary violence. True christianity had nothing to do in this dark business. This was the revelation of the Man of Sin which had been previously let or hindered by pagan emperors.

The difference between Alexander and Arius arose from the neglect or disregard of the doctrinal statements and facts as revealed in the word of God on the subject of the nature and character of Christ, and by indulging in metaphysical speculations, aided by Clement's natural religion, without regard to the word.

It is impossible for those who entertain a reverential regard for the great God not to be struck with the presumption of sinful, ignorant, erring mortals, who would dare to investigate a subject of such awful import as the *modus* of the divine existence, or who would presume to go further in the discovery of God than he has revealed himself.

It would now seem, that, according to the most enlightened scripture views of the subject, both sides of the Arian controversy in the fourth century were wrong, and yet both in some degree were right:—for, as has been observed by a distinguished orthodox writer of Europe of the present day, and which agrees pretty much with the principles of the Andover school in Massachusetts, "Divine revelation never leads us to conceive of the Son of God abstractly from the incarnation of the Word. The Word that was God was made flesh. The Holy Ghost overshadowed the Virgin Mary;—this was the reason, not only of her conceiving that holy thing, but also of its being called the Son of God. Although the sonship of Christ always supposes and includes his godhead, in which the eternal original and essential dignity of his person consists; yet it does not appear from scripture that he is called the Son of God, merely as God, or to teach us the origin and manner of his existence in the godhead; it seems applicable to him as Emanuel, God with us." Human knowledge of Jehovah can go no further than the terms in which the divine nature as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are revealed. The cherubim veil the rest with their wings.

In the western states a very unprofitable controversy has existed on this subject. If men could be content with the scripture statements of the nature and character of Christ, and could realize the fact that he was worshipped as God by inspired apostles and christians, for which they suffered death, and which was indeed the first cause of their persecution, it would end all controversy, and we would soon see a union of sentiment. Without the agreement that Christ is really an object of worship, and is of course Divine, there can never be christian union between them.

These disputes have originated a technical phraseology on both sides, which has greatly narrowed the vocabulary in religion, and has rendered some modes of expression almost obsolete, which were indulged in without scruple by the sacred writers. They have occasioned, on the Arian side of the question, in many instances, the relinquishment of the latitude with which the scriptures express themselves on the nature and glory of Christ, and have produced a scrupulous and systematic cast of diction which is

altogether inconsistent with the noble freedom displayed by the inspired penmen. Many expressions are employed, without hesitation, in scripture, which are rarely found even in the direct form of quotation in their writings, and are never heard in their public addresses but with a view of subjecting them to explanations and speculations, which so mutilate and mar the character of Christ as to render him altogether an object unfit for the worship of christians; and who, if thus seen, had never been worshipped by Stephen and Paul and the apostolic christians. Paul wrote his first epistle to "the church of God which is at Corinth," and "to all that in every place call upon, or invoke, the name of, or worship, Jesus Christ our Lord, both their and our Lord."

The next instance of creed-making was in the reign of Henry VIII. and his immediate successors. This is said to have formed the dawn of the Reformation, which has eventuated in the formation of the Episcopal church in England and in these United States, with which also the Methodist Episcopal church is identified.

After having been married to Catharine of Arragon for a number of years, Henry VIII. became attached to Anne Boleyn, and petitioned the Pope to divorce him from Catharine that he might marry Anne, which the Pope refused or delayed. He then obtained a sentence annulling his marriage from Bishop Cranmer. The Pope rescinded Cranmer's sentence and excommunicated the king. This induced Henry and his parliament to pass an act abolishing the Pope's power in England, and by another act they declared the king supreme head of the church, and all the authority of which the Pope was deprived in England was vested in, and assumed by, Henry.

Henry was a devoted Roman Catholic in heart, and becoming jealous of Ann Boleyn's attachment to the Protestants, had her beheaded, and the next day married Jane Seymour, who dying, he married Anne of Cleves, and in a short time put her away and married Catharine Parr.

Edward VI. the son of Jane Seymour, succeeded his father, Henry VIII. to the throne, when nine years old. He was a good little boy, and friendly to the Protestants. He and his bishops did something towards forming and improving the church of England. Mary, daughter of Catharine of Arragon, succeeded him, restored the supremacy of the Pope of Rome, and beheaded Cranmer and others. After Mary, came to the throne Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn, who restored the ecclesiastical order appointed by her father, and was the first female Pope of England; for she "arrogated to herself that ecclesiastical supremacy over the faith and worship of her subjects which before was supposed exclusively to belong to the court of Rome." The bishops and clergy were so far from having any hand in forming the present established church of England or in ordaining its rites and articles of faith, that it was done not only without them, but in actual opposition to them. The parliament and the queen alone established her supremacy and the common prayer-book, in spite of all opposition from the bishops in the House of Lords; and the convocation then sitting was so far from having any thing to do, in those church articles for reformation, that it presented to Parliament several propositions in behalf of the tenets of popery, directly contrary to the proceedings of parliament.

Such is the pure spiritual origin, if I may speak ironically, of the Episcopal church of England and of these United States. Are there not many of the marks of the Beast upon it? In the



church of Christ he is the sole head, founder and lawgiver; all authority and jurisdiction are in him and flow from him; but in the church of England the king or queen is "supreme head, possessing all power to exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and archbishops, bishops, and archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical persons have no manner of jurisdiction ecclesiastical, but by and under the king's majesty, who has full power and authority to hear all manner of causes ecclesiastical, and to reform and correct all vice, sin, errors, heresies and abuses whatever." 29th Henry viii. ch. 1, 37th Henry viii. ch. 17, 1st Eliz. ch. 1. The bishops for these United States, after the Revolution, could not be ordained in England without the consent of his ecclesiastical supremacy, George III. and it was with difficulty that the succession could be obtained on that account.

In consequence of this supremacy, the king or queen has power to excommunicate from, or re-admit into the church, independent of, yea, in direct opposition to, all its bishops and clergy. They revoke, if they please, any spiritual censure; suspend or excommunicate any bishop or other clergy; and by proclamation, without repentance, can restore the vilest offenders to the bosom of the church. They have power to forbid all preaching for a time, as did Henry VIII. Edward VI. queens Mary and Elizabeth; to limit, instruct, and prescribe to the clergy what they shall and what they shall not preach, as did Elizabeth, James I. Charles, and king William. Such is the channel of legitimacy through which Episcopalians allege that the apostolic succession has been handed down to them, who, with the Roman Catholics, assume the exclusive right to preach the word of God and to administer the ordinances of the New Testament by virtue of this pure spiritual legitimacy, and this, too, in these United States! Can that be the church of Christ, with such a head to it, which exalts itself above all that is called God!

He who reads Jones' History of the Church of Christ, the history of that society of christians which we see described in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Apostolic Epistles, which has been persecuted since Constantine by such secular ecclesiastical establishments as that of the English episcopacy, will readily perceive that the church of Christ is quite a different thing from such hierarchies, and that their creeds and confessions have no claim to divine authority, but are reprobated by it. It will be seen that that which has been described by Mosheim and Milner as the church of Christ has been the beastly persecutor of his church.

The Methodist Society and system was first formed in 1729 by the association of John and Charles Wesley and some other persons, for religious exercises and their own improvement in reading the scriptures. Their regularity and seriousness procured for them the name of *Methodists*. Mr. Wesley gives us the following account of Methodism:—"The first rise of Methodism (so called) was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford; the second was at Savannah, in April, 1736, twenty or thirty persons met at my house; the last was at London on this day, (viz. May 1, 1738,) when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to a free conversation, begun and ended with prayer." From 1760 to 1790, several persons of Mr. Wesley's society emigrated from England and Ireland and settled in various parts of America. During the war between England and America all

communication between the two societies was cut off. This was very much felt by the American Methodists. Mr. Asbury, the senior minister, was importuned to take proper measures that the societies might enjoy the privileges of other churches, by the ordination of ministers. This he refused because of his attachment to the church of England. On this, a majority of the preachers separated from him and chose out of themselves three senior brethren, who ordained others by the imposition of hands. Mr. Asbury prevailed on them to return, and by a vote at one of their conferences, the ordination was declared void. After the war Mr. Wesley drew up a plan of church government, &c. for the American Methodists, and ordained Dr. Coke a *joint superintendent* with Mr. Asbury over the Methodist connexion in North America. The reason Mr. Wesley assigned for this measure was the following, which he gave in answer to a question put to him by William Jones, a chaplain of lord bishop Horn, in the following words: "Whether it was true that he (Wesley) had invested two gentlemen with the *episcopal* character, and had sent them in that character to America?" "As soon," said Mr. Wesley in answer, "as we had made peace with America, and allowed them their independence, all religious connexion between this country and the independent colonies was at an end; in consequence of which the sectaries fell to work to increase their several parties—and the Anabaptists, in particular, were carrying all before them.—Something was therefore to be done, without loss of time, for this *poor people* (as he called them) in America; and he had therefore taken the step in question with a hope of preventing further disorders." Thus Mr. Wesley, who was only a presbyter, consecrated two bishops, which was complained of by bishop Horn in his charge to the clergy of Norwich. See Jones' Life of Horn in Horn's works, vol. i. p. 161. and vol. iv. p. 52.

I frankly confess that Mr. Wesley had as much of a divine right to ordain bishops, to form a creed, to make a book of discipline, and to ordain and establish rites and ceremonies in the church, as the pope of Rome and all his cardinals had; or as had Henry VIII. and pope Elizabeth with their parliaments and bishops; or as had parliament with the Westminster Assembly, who made the Presbyterian Confession of Faith; or as had the seven Baptist churches of London, or the one hundred churches who composed the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. In behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one lawgiver, and head of the church, however, I aver that all these powers have been exercised without right, and in opposition to his authority; and any man who submits to them as authoritative in religion, worships the image of the Beast and bears his name.

The Westminster Confession of Faith was formed by the Westminster Assembly, which was convened as an ecclesiastical council of parliament in 1643. The ordinance which convened them stated that they were "to be consulted with by parliament for settling the government and liturgy of the Church of England." Its professed design was to reform Episcopacy to the standard of former times. But the interests of parliament, in opposition to king Charles I. became so reduced that they were obliged to call in the aid of the Scots. Their aid was offered on condition that the Parliament and the Westminster Assembly would abandon Episcopacy, and attempt the establishment of

Presbyterianism, which at length they advanced into *jus divinum*, or a divine institution, derived expressly from Christ and the apostles. On the 17th of August, 1643, the Solemn League and Covenant, embracing these objects, was delivered into the assembly by Dr. Henderson. It was adopted by parliament and sent over the three kingdoms to be sworn to and signed. The objects stated in the covenant were to promote the extirpation of popery, prelacy, heresy, schism, scepticism, and idolatry, and endeavor a union between the kingdoms in one confession of faith, one form of church government, and one directory of worship. They took an oath to be orthodox in doctrine agreeably to the word of God; and in discipline to do what they should conceive would be most to the glory of God and the good and peace of the church. The Westminster Confession of Faith was the result of this holy alliance. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in these United States say, in their minutes of 1824, in reference to the Westminster Assembly, that "its members were full of the Holy Ghost" when they produced that Confession.

The Baptist Confession of Faith was published in London in 1643, not under the name of a baptist confession, but "of seven congregations in London." "The name of baptist," as is observed by Adams in his History of the Religious World, "is only of modern date and of local application." Anabaptists and anti-paido-baptists had been the usual epithets by which christians who believed that the immersion of believers was baptism, had been called by their opposers. They professedly published the confession of faith for the information and satisfaction of those that did not understand what their principles were or had entertained prejudices against them, and persecuted them, on account of sentiments which they did not entertain.

In their confession they say, "We confess that we know but in part; to show us from the word of God, that which we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and to them. But if any man shall impose upon us any thing that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should, in his strength, rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, and if it were possible, to die a thousand deaths, rather than do any thing against the truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences." They did not assume or bear the name of baptists, but professed themselves to be baptized congregations.

Thus I have given a short but just sketch of the origin of the sects and creeds of our country. In my next number I design to address the preachers of all denominations on the subject of

CHRISTIAN UNION.

#### General Smyth and C. Schultze.

A MR. SCHULTZE, of Virginia, has given a bold challenge to all the clergy in general, and to Bishop Hobart, of New York, in particular, to stand to their arms; for if not, he will publish to the world a treatise "on the doubtful origin of all our miracles, and also all religions, except ancient Theism." This ancient Theism of his is supposed to be the invention of somebody before Moses, whom he represents as a most wicked knave and impostor. We cannot but admire the intrepidity of this strong-minded layman, as he represents himself, who, after forty years' study and twenty years' praying, discovered how Aaron's rod budded and blossomed, and that was by soaking it in warm water or oxyge-

nated muriatic acid, mingled with water, &c. We have no room at present to publish any strictures on a piece of his composition which has appeared in a late Philadelphia paper. But as Mr. Schultze appears a very conscientious Deist, and really a very devout one too, and as he declares his belief to be established in the unity of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, and has very respectfully challenged the clergy—we, though not included in his general challenge, would promise, if the clergy fail to convince him that he is mistaken, to show that his creed is stolen from the bible; for, according to right reason and common sense, the unity of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, are not knowable by our five senses, the sole avenues to the human understanding. And we will engage to show, if Mr. Schultze pleases to favor us with his manuscript, (without a penal bond for five thousand dollars for its return, though we will pledge our word to return it if possible,) that he must, on his own principles, renounce his own creed too, and become a downright Atheist, instead of a Theist. And, indeed, there is no man who can stop on this side of pure Atheism who rejects the Christian religion. And this is equivalent to saying that no man can reasonably be a disbeliever of the Christian religion. EDITOR.

No. 4.] NOVEMBER 7, 1825.

#### A Narrative of the Origin and Formation of the Westminster or Presbyterian Confession of Faith. No. VI.

THE Parliament, desiring to comprehend the Independents within the new establishment recommended by the Assembly at Westminster, or to give them a full toleration, did, on the 13th of September, 1644, order a grand committee of accommodation to consider the points of difference. The Independents would have stated the points of difference and would have endeavored a compromise while the discipline of the church was pending in the Assembly; but, at that time, the Presbyterians insisted that the new form of government should first pass into a law as a standard, before the exceptions of the Independents should be considered. Upon which they were adjourned by the House of Commons till the affair should be determined in the Assembly; who agreed, April 4, 1645, "that the brethren who had entered their dissent against the Presbyterian government should be a committee to bring in the whole frame of their government in a body, with their grounds and reasons." The Independents desired liberty to bring in their objections by parts as the Presbyterians had done their advices; but this not being admitted, they desired time to perfect their plan before any other scheme passed into a law, but the Presbyterians, without any regard to the compromise, by the assistance of their Scotch friends, pushed the affair to a conclusion in Parliament; upon which the Independents laid aside their own model, and published a remonstrance complaining of the artful conduct of the Assembly; and that the discipline of the church being fixed, it was too late to think of a comprehension.\* Thus the Presbyterians jockeyed the Independents, and intrigued their *jus divinum*.

The Parliament saw the mistake, and by their own hands resumed the affair, and revived the committee of accommodation, Nov. 6, 1645.

A committee of the most distinguished Independents, and also of the leading Presbyterians,

\* Neal, volume 3. page 307.



met several times on the subject of accommodation and toleration. At their last meeting, March 9, the Presbyterian paper in answer to the overtures of the Independents, concluded with these remarkable words—"That whereas their (Independent) brethren say that uniformity ought to be urged no farther than is agreeable to all men's consciences, and to their edification, it seems to them as if their brethren (the Independents) not only desired liberty of conscience for themselves, but for all men, and would have us think that we are bound by our covenant to bring the churches in the three kingdoms to no nearer a conjunction and uniformity than is consistent with the liberty of all men's consciences; which, whether it be the sense of the covenant, we leave with the honorable committee." Hereupon "Jeremiah Burroughs, a divine of great candor and moderation, declared in the name of the Independents, that if their congregations might not be exempted from that coercive power of the classes—if they might not have liberty to govern themselves in their own way, as long as they behave peaceably to the civil magistrate, they were resolved to suffer or go to some other place of the world where they might enjoy their liberty. But while men think there is no way of peace but by forcing all to be of the same mind—while they think the civil sword is an ordinance of God to determine all controversies of divinity, and that it must needs be attended with fines and imprisonments to the disobedient; while they apprehend there is no medium between a strict uniformity and a general confusion of all things; while these sentiments prevail, there must be a base subjection of men's consciences to slavery, a suppression of much truth, and great disturbances in the christian world."

Thus ended the last committee of Lords and Commons and Assembly of Divines for accommodation. Nothing was more detested and abhorred by the majority of the Presbyterians than toleration. The London divines, who often at this time held their meetings at Zion College, and had a synod every Monday to consult in order to aid the Westminster Assembly in carrying their points favorable to their own establishment, and in opposition to any toleration of other sectaries—besought, in a letter of January 15, 1645, the Assembly "to oppose with all their might the great Diana (toleration) of the Independents." In this letter these words are to be found—"Not, say they, that we can harbor the least jealousy of your zeal, fidelity, or industry in the opposing and extirpating of such a root of gall and bitterness as toleration is, and will be both to the present and future ages." The city ministers, in a provincial assembly, Nov. 2, 1749, in a vindication of their beloved presbytery, "represent universal toleration as contrary to godliness, opening a door to libertinism and profaneness, and a tenet to be rejected as soul poison."\*

Such was the spirit of the Presbyterians both in and out of the creed-making assembly; and, as Mr. Neal justly observes, this *no toleration* was turned upon themselves by the prelatists in twenty years; so that they who would, and who did shut the gates of toleration and of mercy upon others, had those very gates shut in their own face. Mr. Baxter, tyrannical as he was, lived to deplore the blindness and obstinacy of this assembly upon this subject. His words are, "The Presbyterian ministers were so little sensible of their own infirmities, that they would

\* Neal, page 313.

not agree to tolerate those who were not only tolerable, but worthy instruments and members in the churches, prudent men, who were for union in things necessary, for liberty in things unnecessary, and for charity in all; but they could not be heard."

We shall notice but one other act of this assembly, and dismiss them from our view for a while. The Parliament requested them to recommend some other version of the Psalms of David than Sternhold's and Hopkins'. They read over Rouse's version, and, after several amendments, sent it up to the House, Nov. 14, 1645, with the following recommendation: "Whereas the honorable House of Commons, by an order bearing date Nov. 20, 1643, have recommended the Psalms published by Mr. Rouse to the consideration of the Assembly of Divines, the Assembly has caused them to be carefully perused; and as they are now altered and amended, do approve them; and humbly conceive they may be useful and profitable to the church if they be permitted to be publicly sung. Accordingly they were authorized by the two Houses."

Thus we have seen how the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, Solemn League and Covenant, Directory for Public Worship, Form of Discipline, Presbyterian Church Government, and Rouse's version of the Psalms of David, got to be canonical and of divine authority. And with deep sorrow, too, we have seen that no toleration was the first sprout from this sweet or bitter root. The following items give the whole in miniature:—

1. When king Charles I. sought the assistance of his Catholic subjects in carrying on a war for his own prerogative, the Parliament which opposed him sought the assistance of the Scots nation in resisting his claims.

2. The Scots, prejudiced in favor of Calvinism, through the preaching of Knox and others of the Geneva school, agreed to assist their English neighbors upon condition that they would assist them or unite with them in establishing one creed, one discipline, one ecclesiastical government in both nations.

3. In order to this, it was stipulated that an assembly of divines be called as an ecclesiastical council, to aid the Parliament in settling a religious establishment that would meet the views of the Scots.

4. That the assembly at Westminster was summoned, convened, sworn, instructed, paid, and controlled by this parliament.

5. That the solemn league and covenant was introduced, fashioned, matured, and established by the same divines and parliament.

6. That Rouse's psalms were canonized and legitimized by the same authority.

7. And that the whole ended in religious despotism, tyranny, and *no toleration*. That swords and constables, exiles, confiscation, and death, were the attendants and sanctions of this system.

It is to be hoped that many of the modern Presbyterians have seen the folly of their creed makers, and do lament that such should have been the circumstances which gave birth to their system.

EDITOR.

In presenting our readers with the following extract, we are afraid of being charged with the crime of plagiarism; because it will be remembered that, if we have not used the very words and phrases in some of our public addresses, we have certainly on various occasions, *viva voce*,

and, perhaps, with the pen, too, expressed every idea in the extract, and yet never acknowledged Mr. Locke as our tutor in any instance. Yet, strange as it may appear, we are perfectly innocent of the crime. For, until a few days ago, we had never seen or read one sentence in this work. In preparing for the edition of the New Testament, among other words lately received, this of the justly celebrated Locke came into our hands. It is the 3d edition, published in London, 1733, nearly a century ago. This great layman, commentator, and philosopher, to whom all the British empire and all America are indebted for his essays on Toleration, on the Human Understanding, and on other accounts, did, in our judgment, and in that of the great Dr. Pierce, and many others, make the best effort towards understanding the apostolic epistles ever made since the great apostacy took place. But he was a layman, else he should have been better known and more universally read as a commentator. His praise as a philosopher is commensurate with the English tongue—and, indeed, with modern Europe; but his character as a biblical critic is not so well known, because he had never been consecrated. We publish this extract on account of its intrinsic importance, and to show that some of those views which are said to be peculiarly our own, were entertained a hundred years ago, and concur in showing the necessity of the translation of the New Testament which we are about to publish.

ED. C. B.

*Extract from the Preface to Locke's Paraphrase and Notes on Four of Paul's Epistles.*

"TO THESE we may subjoin two external causes that have made no small increase of the native and original difficulties that keep us from an easy and assured discovery of St. Paul's sense, in many parts of his epistles, and those are—

"First. The dividing of them into chapters and verses, as we have done; whereby they are so chopped and minced, and, as they are printed, stand so broken and divided, that not only the common people take the verses usually for distinct aphorisms, but even men of more advanced knowledge, in reading them, lose very much of the strength and force of the coherence, and the light that depends on it. Our minds are so weak and narrow, that they have need of all the helps and assistances that can be procured, to lay before them undisturbedly the thread and coherence of any discourse; by which alone they are truly improved, and led into the genuine sense of the author. When the eye is constantly disturbed with loose sentences, that, by their standing and separation, appear as so many distinct fragments, the mind will have much ado to take in, and carry on in its memory, a uniform discourse of dependent reasonings; especially having from the cradle been used to wrong impressions concerning them, and constantly accustomed to hear them quoted as distinct sentences, without any limitation or explication of their precise meaning from the place they stand in, and the relation they bear to what goes before or follows. These divisions also have given occasion to the reading these epistles by parcels and in scraps, which has farther confirmed the evil arising from such partitions. And I doubt not but every one will confess it to be a very unlikely way to come to the understanding of any other letters, to read them piecemeal, a bit today, and another scrap tomorrow, and so on by broken intervals; especially if the pause and cessation should be made as the chapters the apostle's epistles are divided

into, to end sometimes in the middle of a sentence. It cannot therefore be wondered at, that that should be permitted to be done to Holy Writ, which would visibly disturb the sense and hinder the understanding of any other book whatever. If Tully's epistles were so printed, and so used, I ask whether they would not be much harder to be understood, less easy and less pleasant to be read by much than now they are?

"How plain soever this abuse is, and what prejudice soever it does to the understanding of the sacred scripture, yet if a bible was printed as it should be, and as the several parts of it were writ, in continued discourses where the argument is continued, I doubt not but the several parties would complain of it as an innovation and a dangerous change in the publishing those holy books. And, indeed, those who are for maintaining their opinions, and the systems of parties by sound of words, with a neglect of the true sense of scripture, would have reason to make and foment the outcry. They would most of them be immediately disarmed of their great magazine of artillery wherewith they defend themselves, and fall upon others. If the Holy Scripture were but laid before the eyes of christians in its due connexion and consistency, it would not then be so easy to snatch out a few words, as if they were separate from the rest, to serve a purpose to which they do not at all belong, and with which they have nothing to do. But as the matter now stands, he that has a mind to it may, at a cheap rate, be a notable champion for the truth; that is, for the doctrines of the sect that chance or interest has cast him into. He need but be furnished with verses of sacred scripture, containing words and expressions that are but flexible (as all general, obscure, and doubtful ones are) and his system that has appropriated them to the orthodoxy of his church, makes them immediately strong and irrefragable arguments for his opinion. This is the benefit of loose sentences and scripture crumbled into verses, which quickly turn into independent aphorisms. But if the quotation in the verse produced were considered as a part of a continued, coherent discourse, and so its sense were limited by the tenor of the context, most of these forward and warm disputants would be quite stripped of those which they doubt not now to call spiritual weapons; and they would have often nothing to say that would not shew their weakness and manifestly fly in their faces. I crave leave to set down a saying of the learned and judicious Mr. Selden:—'In interpreting the scripture,' says he, 'many do as if a man should see one have ten pounds, which he reckoned by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, meaning 4 was but four units, and 5 five units, &c. and that he had in all but ten pounds. The other that sees him, takes not the figures together, as he does, but picks here and there; and thereupon reports that he had five pounds in one bag, and six pounds in another bag, and nine pounds in another bag, &c. when as, in truth, he has but ten pounds in all. So we pick out a text here and there to make it serve our turn; whereas, if we take it all together, and consider what went before and what followed, we find it meant no such thing.'"

*A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.*  
No. IX.

On the Breaking of Bread.—No. IV.

I do not aim at prolixity, but at brevity, in discussing the various topics which are necessary to be introduced into this work. We are not desirous to shew how much may be said on this or



any other subject, but to shew how little is necessary to establish the truth, and to say much in a few words. We shall not, then, dwell any longer on the scriptural authority for the weekly breaking of bread; but for the sake of those who are startled at what they call innovation, we shall adduce a few historical facts and incidents. We lay no stress upon what is no better than the traditions of the church, or upon the testimony of those called the *primitive* fathers, in settling any part of christian worship or christian obedience. Yet, when the scriptures are explicit upon any topic which is lost sight of in modern times, it is both gratifying and useful to know how the practice has been laid aside and other customs been substituted in its room.—There is, too, a corroborating influence in authentic history, which, while it does not authorize any thing as of divine authority, it confirms the conviction of our duty in things divinely established, by observing how they were observed and how they were laid aside.

All antiquity concurs in evincing that for the three first centuries all the churches broke bread once a week. Pliny, in his *Epistles*, book 10th; Justin Martyr, in his *Second Apology* for the Christians; and Tertullian, *De Ora.* p. 135, testify that it was the universal practice in all the weekly assemblies of the brethren, after they had prayed and sang praises—"then bread and wine being brought to the chief brother, he takes it and offers praise and thanksgiving to the Father, in the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit. After prayer and thanksgiving the whole assembly says, Amen. When thanksgiving is ended by the chief guide, and the consent of the whole people, the deacons (as we call them) give to every one present part of the bread and wine, over which thanks are given."

The weekly communion was preserved in the Greek church till the seventh century; and, by one of their canons, "such as neglected three weeks together were excommunicated."—*Erskine's Dissertations*, p. 271.

In the fourth century, when all things began to be changed by baptized Pagans, the practice began to decline. Some of the councils in the western part of the Roman empire, by their canons, strove to keep it up. The council held at Illiberis in Spain, A. D. 324, decreed that "no offerings should be received from such as did not receive the Lord's Supper."—*Council Illi. canon 28.*

The council at Antioch, A. D. 341, decreed that "all who came to church, and heard the scriptures read, but afterwards joined not in prayer, and receiving the sacrament, should be cast out of the church till such time as they gave public proof of their repentance."—*Council Ant. canon 2.*

All these canons were unable to keep a carnal crowd of professors in a practice for which they had no spiritual taste; and, indeed, it was likely to get out of use altogether. To prevent this, the council of Agatha, in Languedoc, A. D. 506, decreed "that none should be esteemed good christians who did not *communicate* at least three times a year—at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday." *Coun. Agatha, canon 18.* This soon became the standard of a good christian, and it was judged presumptuous to commune oftener.

Things went on in this way for more than six hundred years, until they got tired of even three communications in one year; and the infamous council of Lateran, which decreed auricular confession and transubstantiation, decreed that

"an annual communion at Easter was sufficient." This association of the "sacrament" with Easter, and the mechanical devotion of the ignorant at this season, greatly contributed to the worship of the Host. *Bingham's Ori. B.* 15. c. 9. Thus the breaking of bread in simplicity and godly sincerity once a week, degenerated into a pompous sacrament once a year at Easter.

At the Reformation this subject was but slightly investigated by the reformers. Some of them, however, paid some attention to it. Even Calvin, in his *Ins. lib. 4. chap. 17. 46.* says:—"And truly this custom, which enjoins communicating once a year, is a most evident contrivance of the Devil, by whose instrumentality soever it may have been determined."

And again, (*Ins. lib. 6. chap. xviii. sec 46.*) he says:—"It ought to have been far otherwise. Every week, at least, the table of the Lord should have been spread for christian assemblies, and the promises declared, by which, in partaking of it, we might be spiritually fed."

Martin Chemnitz, Witsius, Calderwood, and others of the reformers and controversialists, concur with Calvin; and, indeed, almost every commentator on the New Testament, concurs with the Presbyterian Henry in these remarks on Acts xx. 7. "In the primitive times it was the custom of many churches to receive the Lord's Supper every Lord's day."

The Belgic reformed church, in 1581, appointed the supper to be received every other month. The reformed churches of France, after saying that they had been too remiss in observing the supper but four times a year, advise a greater frequency. The church of Scotland began with four sacraments in a year; but some of her ministers got up to twelve times. Thus things stood till the close of the last century.

Since the commencement of the present century, many congregations in England, Scotland, Ireland, and some in the United States and Canada, both Independents and Baptists, have attended upon the supper every Lord's day, and the practice is every day gaining ground.

These historical notices may be of some use to those who are ever and anon crying out *Innovation! Innovation!* But we advocate the principle and the practice on apostolic grounds alone. Blessed is that servant who, knowing his master's will, does it with expedition and delight.

Those who would wish to see an able refutation of the Presbyterian mode of observing the sacrament, and a defence of weekly communion, would do well to read Dr. John Mason's *Letters on frequent Communion*, who is himself a high-toned Presbyterian, and, consequently, his remarks will be more regarded by his brethren than mine.

EDITOR.

#### Paraphrase on Rom. VIII. 7—25.—By Request.

The proposition which the apostle has in design to enforce, is that contained in the last clause of verse 17. viz. "If we believing Jews and Gentiles suffer, without apostacy, the bodily afflictions incident to our obeying the Lord, as he suffered the afflictions attendant on his humiliation, we shall be glorified with him at the resurrection of the just, at which time we shall be fully revealed as the adopted sons of God."

For my part, says Paul, I do not esteem the afflictions of our bodies in the present life as worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be exhibited in us at the resurrection of our bodies from the grave. For such is the transcendent glory to be revealed in us, that the earnest

desire of the believing Jew and Gentile looks in hope for the manifestations of the sons of God in their glorified bodies, in which they will appear in character as the adopted sons of God. For the believing Jew and Gentile, as respects the body, were, in consequence of one man's sin, subjected to corruption in the grave; not, indeed, with their own consent; but they now cheerfully submit their bodies to the dust of death because God has subjected them to it, in hope that these mortal bodies shall be liberated from the bondage of corruption in the grave, and introduced into the freedom of the glorious immortality of the children of God. Besides, we know that bodily suffering is not exclusively the lot of christians, for the whole human race groan together and travail in pain even yet with all their efforts to escape these evils. And not only the unbelieving Jew and Gentile, but ourselves, who, by faith in Jesus, are become the sons of God, who have the chief and most exalted gifts of the Holy Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, anxiously waiting for the full adoption of the sons of God; namely, the redemption of our bodies from the grave at the resurrection of the just. For we are sustained in these bodily sufferings in hope of this glorious resurrection. Now you know, O Romans! that hope which has obtained its object is not hope; for what a man sees, how can he hope for it? But if we hope for that which we do not see, then we patiently wait for it, as is the case with respect to the resurrection and glorification of our bodies.

*To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.*

MR. CAMPBELL—As different persons understand the same expressions very differently, so it happens in my neighborhood with the readers of the *Christian Baptist*, until it is at length agreed to refer to you for your real meaning on one point, with regard to which many are very tenacious.

The fact is just this, that while I cannot, for certainty, see any thing to fault in what you have advanced (so far as I have happened to see and read) but much to admire and approve, being long since convinced that all those hireling preachers and high-flying professors with them, who are so hand-and-glove with the world that they bear none of that persecution, hatred, and odium, which Christ promised as the sure and inevitable lot and portion of all his true followers—I say, while I am fully convinced that these are not the true and real followers of Christ, in that strait and narrow way pointed out by him, many think otherwise for want of knowing and duly considering those well pointed truths in proof of it, which you are gradually furnishing, and which, I trust in God, will in the end be attended with great moral good.

A religious Archimedes has long been wanted to raise the moral world from its chaotic darkness as to true and abstract religion.

But, sir, many think that you go too far, and condemn all, because (like or as a man of true and accurate science and extensive erudition) you do not, as such ones cannot, agree fully and exactly with any one of the sects—because, say they, you seem to condemn all the sects, except perhaps the society of the Friends, called Quakers; and that you seem rather to bear on them, by suggesting that revelation is full (by which I understand you to confine your ideas essentially to scripture revelation, or the like,) whereas they avow a belief that they are, by times, under the monitions of the Spirit, which I am inclined to

believe of some of them, except when they, like others, run into the heathenish and unscriptural practice of making long public prayers, which my bible wholly condemns—neither can I believe that the Spirit of God ever taught any thing so totally unreasonable and absurd. However, to do them justice, I think that they do not make so long prayers, full of “vain repetitions,” and pompous dictatorial matter.

But, sir, if you should utterly deny all the monitions of the Spirit and every kind of revelation in our times, then we should certainly be at issue on that point. For I fully believe that, in this respect, God is the same, to his true and faithful followers, at least, as he was in the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Joseph and others, and that he still, by times, reveals certain things to some men and women, and points out to their understandings certain things which are, and things which shall come to pass—I say, I believe this, because my experience has proved it; because I have, several times in my life, been advised of things to come, in such a way and manner, and upon such a particular crisis, that it seemed impossible for me to mistake what was intended.

And though these monitory impressions of something to come, were several times limited to things most improbable and unlikely to take place, still they never once failed. Also, being generally accompanied with an impression that I must heed, mind, or remember them, as things which would certainly take place in due time, I was therefore generally quite unable to doubt of them for a moment of time.

I have judged these monitions as coming directly from Deity, because I think that no one else knows all things to come, and is also friendly enough to advise us of them beforehand.

To conclude, sir, let me plead for the rights of conscience and opinion, especially for the society of Friends; for, if our Saviour's words are verified at all, by any people, it must be allowed to be by them—I mean in what he said to his followers, when arraigned for their opinions and preaching; and whereon he commanded them not to meditate what they should answer, or what they should say, adding that he would give them words and arguments which none of their adversaries should be able to gainsay or resist. If this promise can be consistently extended to any of his followers of latter times, it would seem to me to be most applicable to them, because their opponents cannot refute their arguments—they cannot hold way with them in dispute upon scripture ground (see their evasive excuses upon Berkely and other of their writers,) and therefore have had recourse to civil power to crush and silence them, just as your opposers would now silence you, if they could, by the same means, and for the very self-same reasons; namely, because they cannot hold out a fair argument with you, either upon scriptural or philosophic ground, right reason or common sense.

It is for this reason, sir, that priestcraft is at its very wit's end, and in the very raving paroxysms of desperation, for fear of the loss of its empire over the understandings of the multitude. It fears that people will begin to use their brains properly, and to think and reflect on the nonsense of their arrogant pretensions, as though God had given them a power which mortal never had, namely, to be the real and efficient cause of the salvation of others, which would leave this plain and horrid inference as an inevitable result, namely, that if by their presence and exertions many souls would actually be saved, that it is



hence most clearly and fairly deducible, that, by their absence or remissness, many souls would be lost. This, although not perceived by many truly honest and religious minded persons (who are therefore zealous to send missionaries out to all the world) is a most horrid and abominable doctrine. For as such circumstances depend on the providence of God, which has not left it to any one to choose in what age and place he should be born, so as to have a religious education and an able and faithful teacher, therefore it refers back the whole blame on Deity and his providence for all that are supposed to be lost in that way; and which, therefore, as a Mr. Withereil justly remarks, in a like case, makes God more cruel than the Devil can possibly be, because the Devil has not power thus to plan and execute the loss and destruction of nearly all, thus unconditionally, as to any thing in their power to fix, control, or alter in the least degree.

Christ said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men;" but he has no where told us, as I understand, that these same men would otherwise be lost; for this would reflect great injustice upon God and his providence, which is said to notice even the little sparrow.

Again we read, that "they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for evermore;" by which I understand that they who are the willing and faithful instruments of God's providence, in this way, shall, in due time, reap the just reward of all their labors and exertions.

But I must not enlarge much, because it is quite an incorrigible task to undertake to make the multitude see that every genuine religious tenet must have fair reason as well as scripture for its support.

And again, because I think that right reason and scripture, and the obvious character of Deity, fully warrants the idea that he would be disposed to reveal certain things, in some peculiar cases, directly to mortals like us; and that he accordingly does reveal them, while on my part I may not be able to make people see it to be so, any better than I can make them see and believe that, according to scripture and reason, God is far too just to ever let or suffer one single soul to be ultimately lost, because, in his providence, no christian professor was ever sent to teach and instruct it. Or, again, any better than I can make them see and understand that, although the things taught by the preacher may be, as the scripture says of good works, "good and profitable to men," yet that they never can be the entire and efficient cause of their salvation.

AN OCCASIONAL READER.

To "*An Occasional Reader.*"

DEAR SIR,—ALL that I know of God, and I believe all that can be known of him, is from the revelation he has given us. If, without a revelation from himself, men could have known his existence or his character, a written record or a verbal representation of himself was superfluous. And if, without the revelation, he can be known, they who have it not are just in as good circumstances as we, if not in better. I cordially embrace and cheerfully subscribe the aphorism of Paul, which affirms that the world by its philosophy knows not God. This is not only an article of my faith, but an item of my experience. Is any child born with innate ideas of God? Do we not see that they must all be taught his being and perfections? Where is the nation which knows him without a written revelation or some remnants of tradition originally derived from the bible? These questions I do

not propose to you as if you were of a contrary opinion; but to enforce the truth that all that is known or knowable of God is derived either directly or indirectly from his verbal communications to men—and aided by these, the heavens declare his glory, and the earth proclaims his goodness, and every thing in the universe pays its tribute to the bible. So long, then, as I believe the bible to be from God, so long I must believe it to be a perfect revelation—not perfect in the absolute sense of the word, for this would not suit us any more than Paul's communicating revelations which he had in the third heavens; but it is perfect as adapted to man in his present circumstances. Many things are only hinted, not fully revealed; and while here we must see as through a glass darkly, but in another state we shall have a revelation of his glory which will be perfectly adapted to us in those circumstances; but even then that revelation will not be absolutely perfect, for a revelation absolutely perfect would make God as well known to his creatures as he is to himself, which I would humbly say appears to me impossible.

As to those monitions and impressions of which you speak, I know some things certainly, and I conjecture others. The bible tells me that communications, monitions, and impressions have been made upon the minds of men in dreams, visions, trances, &c. yet the knowledge of salvation was not communicated in this way. It would have been as easy, by a dream or a monition of the Spirit, as you speak, to have made Cornelius and his friends acquainted with the salvation of Jesus Christ, as to have vouchsafed the vision to Cornelius and to Peter. Yet this was not done, because not agreeable to the divine mind, who sees not as man sees. When there appeared to have been a necessity for communications of this kind they were not made. And now that the revelation is completed and given to us with awful sanctions, and the most tremendous threats against innovators, and against those who either add to it or diminish from it; it is as absurd to expect such monitions as it is to trust in dreams and visions. This far may be known with certainty. With regard to impressions and monitions now made on the human mind respecting passing events, either when the body is asleep or awake, we have heard much, experienced something, and know nothing. I once ventured to predict a future event from a dream which I then believed would come to pass, and which did actually come to pass contrary to any expectation derived from things known. But what of this? How many such things would be necessary to form a systematic theory? It might be conjectured that, as angels are ministering spirits, employed by him that rules over all and knows all things, in performing their respective missions, they do impress the mind of those to whom they minister, and sometimes preadmonish them of future events. But again, others are punished, as was Pilate's wife, by such impressions; and many, if not most of these monitions, are useless, as the persons premonished cannot make any use of them; for this would destroy their character as predictions, which necessarily are unconditional. So that after all, our wisest and happiest course is to attend on the written monitions of the Spirit; for however we may amuse ourselves with speculating upon the subject, we must be ignorant of them until we know what sort of an intercourse exists between embodied and disembodied spirits, which we can never attain to in this state. All the light we have or

can have is as useless as the feeble ray that finds its way through a small aperture into a cell—it neither enlightens, warms, or cheers the solitary prisoner. Let us then attend to the certain prophetic word, as to a light that shines in a dark place, until the full splendor of heavenly light bursts upon our spirits when disencumbered with these clay tenements. Of these remarks it may be said, they are more amusing than instructive.

EDITOR.

#### *Anecdote.*

DURING a late revival at Camillus, New-York, a man who had been sprinkled in his infancy wished to be baptized and join the Presbyterian church. The Presbyterian divines would not baptize him, because he had been sprinkled. The Baptists would not immerse him, because he wanted to join the Presbyterians. At length a new sort of christians, called "Smithites," immersed him. He then joined the Presbyterians. The church was satisfied with his sprinkling, and he with his immersion.

No. 5.]

DECEMBER 5, 1825.

#### *Notes on a Tour.*

WE have been in the practice of making pretty extensive tours for the last three years, with a special reference to gaining correct information on the actual condition of the religious communities in this extensive and prosperous country. We have both read and travelled in quest of information, and have found additional proofs that there is a great difference between reading geography and travelling over the surface of a country; between hearing of, and seeing the religious world; between viewing men and things with our own eyes, and looking at them through the media of books and newspapers; between contemplating society in the closet, and mingling with it in actual operation. We have been long convinced that to live to purpose in any society, it is necessary to be well acquainted with the state of that society; it is necessary, in a certain sense, "to catch the living manners as they rise." Man is a creature incessantly developing himself—perpetually exhibiting new and strange appearances. And while it is true that, "as in water face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man," it is equally certain that the varied year and the ever-shifting scenery of the heavens and the earth are but emblems of the changes continually exhibiting in human society.

Society is continually in a progressive state. It is either advancing in intelligence and virtue, or marching downwards in ignorance and vice. Regardless of the spirit and character of this age and of this great community, many are for holding the people down to the standards of the 16th and 17th centuries. Hence we find the creeds and forms that suited the age and circumstances of our ancestors, cotemporary with Charles I. bound with new rivets on the necks of our countrymen. This is not more absurd than to oblige men to wear the apparel which suited them when boys, and to compel men when they have no taste for the pranks and amusements of children, to go through all the forms.

We are happy to find that, in spite of the reigning doctors of traditions, the people are gradually awaking to a sense of their religious rights and privileges. We find a large majority of most religious communities are quite unsettled in their views of religious principles and practices. They have lost the greater part of that

confidence of being the most reformed christians, and the wisest in the world, which was the characteristic of every sect some quarter of a century ago. Many who thought their church almost infallible, now readily admit that she not only may, but that she actually does, frequently err. And there is a spirit of inquiry marching forth, before which, most assuredly, the rotten systems of tradition and error must and will fall.

We learn, however, from experience, as well as from books, that the human mind is prone to extremes in all circumstances. We see when men have been long enslaved in church or state, they become anarchists in both. Tyranny and anarchy, if not themselves opposites, are, in this respect, the extremes of certain principles and practices. When a tyrant is dethroned, and his vassals liberated, he finds his quietus in a guillotine, and they convert his palaces into towers and strong holds for each other in rotation. So in the church. They who call the Pope Antichrist, and renounce any successor of St. Peter, set themselves up as Popes, and thus a whole congregation of protesters become a college of cardinals, and they will have no Pope because each one wishes to be Pope himself. Democrats in politics, and Independents in religion, are not unfrequently the greatest tyrants in the world. I am a democrat because I love kingly power, and don't like to part with it to other hands. And you are an Independent because you like papal supremacy, and wish to have your share in full. I only mean to say (for I am called a democrat and an Independent) that such is the issue of both, if not closely watched and constantly guarded.

There is anarchy in the church as surely as there is anarchy in the state, and mutinies and insurrections are not confined to sailors and soldiers. My friend Thomas Biblicus, in every sect of which he was a member, and he had been a member of at least four, always opposed every appearance of tyranny in the priests and rulers of the congregations of which he was a member, and was ever and anon talking against his ecclesiastic ruler and priest, and declaiming loud and long on the liberties of the children of God. Finally he became an Independent, and was called to become the president of the meeting, and soon became a full grown despot that could bear no contradiction, and aimed at absolute power in the church.

James Libertas, too, an old acquaintance, eternally declaimed against creeds as impositions on men's consciences, and yet he was always employed in imposing his own opinions upon his brethren, and frittered the society of which he was a member to nothing, by multiplying non-conformists at every meeting. Indeed, many are praising the life they will never lead, and condemning others for their own sins. My cousin, William Puritan, was always lamenting that he never heard "a sermon preached" against evil speaking, and was always telling what evil things his brethren were saying of one another, and yet he always concluded his remarks by observing, that while so many indulged in evil speaking, he must call them all hypocrites and railers.

In my late tour of a thousand miles I was reminded of what I had before discovered, that religious sects and forms cover the earth as the different sorts of timber the soil. In one place it is all oak; in another, all pine; in no place all hickory; in some places every sort of timber. Here it is all Presbyterian, and Methodist under-



wood; there it is all Methodist, and Presbyterian underwood. Here it is all Baptist, and there it is all sorts. Here some bend before they break, and there some break before they bend. I often asked myself, Is this all nature and that all grace? Or is it nature that covers this soil with Baptists, and grace that covers that with Presbyterians? Here Calvinism reigns predominant, and there Arminianism. On one side of the hill they pray to be kept from Arminian errors; on the other side, from Calvinistic errors. To tell a man in one county that he is an Arminian, is to traduce him; to tell him in another that he is a Calvinist, is no honor to him. Again I asked myself, Is this nature or grace? Upon the whole, I discover that many are Calvinists in the things pertaining to the next world, but Arminians in the things pertaining to this. They believe that all things in the next world will be as decreed; but in this they believe that men are rich or poor, honorable or base, according to their works.

Among the strangest occurrences which I witnessed, I note the fact that I visited three associations this fall, having no written creed other than the scriptures of the apostles, and disclaiming any jurisdiction over the churches; they met, had a social interview, and parted without a quarrel. This, indeed, was to me a strange occurrence; for it is almost impossible to assemble half a dozen of teachers of any sect, and to keep good friends for one day.

But one of the most prominent signs of the times, and one of the most significant, I cannot close these desultory remarks without noticing. It is this: The people every where have an insatiable appetite for sound doctrine. They eat whole sermons after sermons, and run after this and that preacher for sound doctrine, and are as hungry as before. Is he sound—is he sound in the faith? This is the all important question, on the solution of which depends the character of the preacher for orthodoxy or heterodoxy—and his reputation is all in all to him. The preachers too generally labor all their lives to die with the reputation of having been great and orthodox preachers; and the people follow them up to hear sound doctrine, to sit as jurors upon their views and abilities, and to bring in a verdict, which, if true, makes them good christians, and the preacher either great or little, sound or unsound in the faith. "But, worse than all, and most to be deplored," sound doctrine is made, like charity, to cover a multitude of sins. One man gets drunk: he is arraigned before the bar of the church: he confesses his fault, and apologizes for it by a dogma of sound doctrine, viz. he is not his own keeper. He is pardoned. This is a sample of the use and importance of sound doctrine. Errors of opinion become in many places the cause of ecclesiastical degradation and of exclusion from the church, while immoralities are overlooked and ascribed to the "remaining corruptions" of human nature. Errors in opinion are treated as felons, while immoralities are indulged as a wayward child, the darling of his mother. This is not so much a sectarian peculiarity, as it is the characteristic of the times. It would be of infinite importance to the religious community and to the rising generation, if, from the teacher's chair, in the church, and in every christian family, less was said about this sound doctrine, and the time occupied therein devoted to recommending, enforcing, and practising that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

EDITOR.

#### Conscience.—No. I.

THERE is a proposition in proof of which a thousand arguments and facts can be adduced. It is the following: *Throughout christendom every man's religious experience corresponds with his religious education.* If any ambiguity rests upon this proposition, it arises not from the terms in which it is laid down, but from the religious systems we have received. This will be removed by a minute attention to what has passed and is now passing in our own minds, and under our own observation amongst men.

One fact will throw much light on this subject. It is this: All those feelings, sensibilities, experience, called religious, begin with the conscience. Conscience is, by the popular philosophers in morals and religion, called the moral sense. Admitting the name as a correct one, it follows that, without conscience, or this moral sense, a man can have no more religious apprehension, feeling, or sensibility, than a blind man can have of colors, or a deaf man of sounds.

But to adapt the above proposition to every apprehension, let it be noted that all systems lay down a consciousness or a conviction of sin or guilt, as previous to repentance and conversion—as the commencement of all true experience. Now in this, conscience is concerned, as all must admit; and this is all that is necessary to prove that all religious feeling, experience, sensibility, or whatever men may please to call it, begins with the conscience. Now if it can be proved that the consciences of men vary according to their education, our proposition is easily proved—that every man's religious experience corresponds with his religious education.

A B feels guilty, or his conscience accuses him of sin, if he eat pork on Friday, or beef during lent. Whereas C D can eat fish, flesh, or fowl, whenever he is hungry and can be so fortunate as to get it, without the least sensibility of guilt, or conviction of sin. It must be admitted in this case and in ten thousand parallel ones, that there is a deep sense of guilt in the breast of A B, and none in the heart of C D, and that a difference of religious education is the cause or reason of this variety of conscience and diversity of religious experience.

E F is convicted of guilt because his children have not been baptized—because he has not dedicated them to the Lord in baptism; and G H could not and dare not have his baptized for the same reason that E F feels guilty in not doing it—because he thinks it a sin.

J K will not be baptized himself in water—his conscience will not permit him; because water baptism is done away as a work of the flesh. L M would feel guilty to commune with N O, the Baptist, and N O would feel guilty to commune with L M, the Presbyterian. In fine, we might go on to show that there are as many consciences as sects, but it is superfluous; enough is said to show that every man's conscience is formed and varies from another according to his education.

Many I know very improperly call convictions of sin, sensibility of guilt, and all the commotions of mind, perturbation and confusion through which they pass, and of which they are conscious—I say, they call it all christian experience. But in so doing, they make Turks, Jews, and Pagans Christians; for all have these religious sensibilities and experiences of which we speak. Infidels themselves have consciences; they fear and tremble though they do not believe, as demons. The conflicts, agonies, remorse, doubts, fears, horrors, reformations, penances, often

christened and confirmed as christian experience, have no christianity about them: Men that are not christians experience such things. Love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance, are the fruits of God's Spirit in the hearts of christians.

A man may put out his own eyes, and stop his own ears, and he may sear his own conscience; but all men have some religious sensibility about them at one period or other—they have a conscience which accuses or excuses, according to their education; and doubts, fears, agonies—hopes and joys too, originate, proceed, and terminate according to their moral sense.

There are some monstrous or unnatural consciences which we can reduce to no system. If we were to attempt it, however, we should fail altogether, unless we could bring them to quadrature with a monstrous or unnatural education. Of this kind is the conscience of X Y W. X could not admit a Methodist preacher into his meeting-house and pulpit, but he could conscientiously admit a theatrical exhibition of folly, vanity, and vice into it, and sit, look on, and laugh at it. Y could not conscientiously, on the Sabbath, go to hear a moral and conscientious teacher of what is called free grace, because of his views of the atonement; and yet he could sit in his house all the Sabbath day and revile his religious neighbors; and on Monday lie and cheat if his interest required it. W debarred all from his communion table who would frequent plays and theatrical exhibitions, and yet he wrote several farces himself, and taught his students to act them in *propria forma*. He debarred all those who were guilty of occasionally hearing any other preacher than himself and his brother field marshals, and yet he could allow his people to hear and read plays and romances without ecclesiastic censure. In short, I see so much of this sort of conscience, as to induce some doubts whether those people have not seared their consciences altogether, and to have arrived at that state which is called by an apostle "past feeling." If they have any qualms of conscience, they are like the pulsations of a dying man or the last throes of a slaughtered ox.

But I find myself digressing from my subject, and shall have to postpone the further illustration of the proposition with which I set out till my next.

EDITOR.

*Review of "Remarks on the Rise, Use, and Unlawfulness of Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Church of God—By John M. Duncan, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Tammany Street, Baltimore."—Part First.*

I SINCERELY lament the one sided zeal and squint eyed piety of our religious polemics on the subject of Mr. Duncan's book. Dr. Miller, of Princeton notoriety, published a short pamphlet in support of creeds, traditions, and clerical domination, which had for its passport into the hands of the laity, the combined influence of the whole theological school at Princeton, the heads of all the Presbyterian departments, and the priestly presses of the religious editors of that denomination. It was extolled by the ambitious clergy, recommended by the itinerants, extracted and eulogized by the Presbyterian editors, sold by book sellers, presidents of colleges, and ruling elders, lent by all the superstitious, and bestowed by the zealots of all the Presbyterian ranks. But Mr. Duncan's book, abounding with good sense; dressed in an elegant style; replete with sound logic; clear, forcible, and all persuasive in argu-

ment, exhibiting a happy alliance of reason, history, and revelation in establishing his views; and breathing a spirit, humble, affectionate, and pious—finds its way without any of Dr. Miller's auxiliaries. Not an editor, not a priest, high or low, to recommend it, and in the western country scarcely a bookseller to attempt to sell it. This is, however, just what I would have expected. The same spirit that prompted my neighbor, the president of Canonsburgh, to cram one of Dr. Miller's pamphlets into the pocket of every student that had room for it on any condition, prompts him, and all the lovers of the reigning ecclesiastics, to be as silent as the grave on Mr. Duncan's *unanswerable* performance. I say unanswerable; for I hesitate not to affirm that amongst all the advocates of creeds on this continent, not one can fairly meet and even plausibly answer the arguments in this book—It is consoling to observe, that notwithstanding the well concerted opposition of the lordly keepers of the keys of intelligence and consciences of the laity, this book is, by its own merit, and the majesty of its strength, commanding the attention, and enlightening the minds of many. I have only to subtract one single item from an unrestricted recommendation of this book, to all in the pulpit and out of it, as a book every way adapted to conciliate the attention, and to illuminate the mind of every reader; and that item is one in which few, if any, of the populars, will agree with me—It is this;—a number of scriptures are quoted in it, and applied in the popular sense. This, however, gives it more force with the populars, and will be regretted only by those who are laboring to affix the same ideas to the words and sentences in the New Testament, which the penmen attached to them. Perhaps Mr. Duncan, in thus quoting them, intended an "*argumentum ad hominem*."

Although the subject of this book is to me now a trite one, and one which has become stale, the writer of it now standing in the same predicament, and with the same views, in which I found myself about a dozen years ago, I read it with both profit and delight. It caused me to do what Paul did when he met with his brethren at Appii Forum and the Three Taverns; "He thanked God and took courage."

I am happy to find that Mr. Duncan is not the only Presbyterian who has the same views on the subject of his book. He is not the only one who teaches his hearers and his readers that creeds, confessions of faith, and ecclesiastical courts are all human institutions, and unlawful. That the Bible is perfectly adapted to all the ends and intentions of its author. He is not alone. There are several other members of the general assembly, who accord with his sentiments, and will unite with him in his efforts to liberate the people from the influence and thralldom of human creeds and church courts. Before giving a few extracts from this book I have only to express my desires and my hopes that Mr. Duncan, and all of the same views, may carry out their sentiments and arguments to their legitimate issue; and exhibit as ably in their lives, as he has in his views, that consistency which has in times past, and will in all time to come, be the greatest ornament of character, and the most convincing evidence that the disciples of Christ are all taught by God.

We simply give a few of the sentiments of the writer without entering into his proof, to give our readers an idea of the work.

In page 4 he expresses a just view of this age.—"All the world is in commotion; or, if not



roused, is waiting in awful suspense for what tomorrow may bring forth. The human mind is in search of something which it has not yet learned to define:—It is the simplicity of the gospel of Christ."

To the same purpose he says, page 23.—"That a change, and a very great change too, is coming, Dr. G. himself believes; and so does every christian who has read his bible. God forbid that we should be disappointed; for, really, ecclesiastical matters are, at present, most terribly distracted."

The author characterizes the times very correctly and beautifully, by telling what he has been made to feel. Page 36.—"We feel, that we cannot disown the supreme authority of our fathers, and determine to think for ourselves, without provoking the displeasure of professing christians. We feel, that we cannot furnish illustrations of evangelical truth, framed according to our own best conceptions; and modified to meet the peculiarities of the day in which we live, as far as we apprehend those peculiarities; without incurring the heaviest censure, under a gratuitous assumption that we are not "walking in the footsteps of the flock." We feel, that we cannot whisper a doubt as to the theological views of divines of "the olden time," or review the crude notions of our youth by the severer thoughts of maturer years, without finding our change to be our reproach, in the estimation of thousands whose good opinion we value. We feel, that to abandon that mode of scriptural exposition, which makes every text to utter some Calvinistic or Arminian dogma; and to exchange it for that which brings up every conscience to the bar of divine revelation, to answer for itself; or which pours the full radiance of the bible over the individual and social habits of men; is to subject ourselves to be reviled for a breach of ordination vows. These things we have been made to feel: and we cannot resist the testimony of our senses. The doctrines of our forefathers have been constituted, in practical life, the rules of our faith. We must have their ideas, their terms, their intellectual associations; every thing must be consecrated by antiquity, or we are not orthodox. Once more we ask, Who would not labor to redeem society from such mental servitude? Who can suppose, that he has too much to sacrifice, to bring men back to God, and to induce them to think for themselves, as if they had a mind and conscience of their own.

In page 12 he acquaints us with his design of writing.—"I write for truth, not for victory; and to demonstrate to the public, that some good reasons exist for my scruples on the subject of creeds and confessions. No man, who has a good cause to manage, has any need to grow vulgar, and descend to personalities; or if he does, he is a feeble advocate, and his cause would succeed much better without him. At the same time, it would be carrying the rules of politeness too far, to require a writer to enfeeble his argument, or not to give it all the force which the circumstances of his subject demanded. On these terms the principles of Dr. M's lecture shall be fairly controverted in the following pages; for I verily believe that he is erroneous, and very erroneous too, in what he has advanced, and that the sentence of heresy is not due to those to whom he awards it."

In page 25 he admits the views ascribed to him in the following words:—"I do not deny the views which are ascribed to me: that is to say, I am an undisguised advocate of the follow-

ing truths:—That God *alone* is Lord of conscience, and that his bible is the *only* rule of faith and practice: Or, if the reader pleases, that church courts and human creeds or confessions are not entitled, in any shape whatever, to control the human conscience."

In page 91 he places himself under the banners of the motto which designates this paper. "We are to call no man or body of men, Master on earth. One is our Master, even Christ. His word is the sole standard by which, as christians, or as churches, we must stand or fall. Happy will it be for us, if we can appeal to the Great Searcher of hearts, that we have not followed the traditions and inventions of men, but the sure word of prophecy, which is given to us to be a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path, to guide us in the way of peace."

In page 101 we have the true philosophy of the difference between primitive and modern christianity.—"We believe, that thus the primitive church did actually live in purity and peace, and that her purity was never corrupted, nor her peace destroyed, until the idea of ecclesiastical power had maddened and degraded her sons and daughters; and led them to substitute human for divine law. We believe, that the whole world is, at this present moment, aiming at a return to the principles and habits of original simplicity, in political, as well as ecclesiastical matters; and that all the political and ecclesiastical powers on earth, cannot prevent the changes which have commenced their reforming and revolutionizing process."—This is not more bold than true.

From page 109 to page 112 he adduces five facts that explode Doctor Miller's theory of ancient human creeds. Of these I can adduce but one as a specimen, page 108.—"The *second* fact is, that synods and councils, whose province it is to form these authoritative rules, did not appear in the christian church until the middle of the second century; were a pure human contrivance, when they did appear; and did nothing but mischief, by interfering with the immensely important, and greatly chequered, interests of christendom, which they were not qualified to manage."

In opening the pages of Mosheim, which he does to great effect against Dr. Miller's views, he pays the following pretty compliment, *en passant*, to such creeds as the Westminster, page 119.—"It is altogether a mistake to suppose, that these ecclesiastical documents, are unsuspected, and untreacherous guardians of truth. They never protected truth nor promoted unity; they never gave health to the church's soul, nor grace and beauty to the church's form; they never hushed contention, nor reconciled conflicting opinions, since they were first introduced. They do none of these things now; but, as of old, they do at this day tarnish the beauty, distract the peace, and cripple the efforts of the church of God. They did then, and they do now, set brothers at variance, and teach them to divide their inheritance on unfair principles, and in the midst of strife and discord. And these things they will always do, while they are permitted to regulate ecclesiastical matters, and divide the church into voluntary associations."

In page 174 we have the following apostrophe to the advocates of creeds—with which we shall close our random extracts at present, promising a few more hereafter on the superlative character of the bible.

"O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What more could have been done to

my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" says the Lord. Come, you ministers of Christ, accept the challenge and reason with your master. Tell him of the insufficiency of his bible, and of your happier legislation in forming creeds! Make it appear in his presence, that there is a necessity for other tests of christian character, than the one he has furnished. Tell him that it is impossible for him to get along in peace and love, unless the form in which he revealed truth be altered, and a concise summary of moral doctrines be framed, as a companion for the bible. Take your stand on the threshold of his holy temple, and proclaim aloud, that men who will not listen to Moses and the prophets, to Christ and his apostles, will be persuaded by your creeds; and that unless this demand is gratified, the church must crumble to pieces. The whole angel host would frown at such presumption."

EDITOR.

#### Universalism.

THERE is a great deal said in this age upon the universal restoration of all demons and wicked men to the eternal happiness of saints and angels. It is true that the demons are yet in purgatory, and that those that die in their sins are to go through a purgatorial punishment proportioned to the number and magnitude of their sins at the allowance of — years for each transgression according to some systems; and according to others on the ratio of — hundreds of years. Satan and his colleagues have been out of the presence of God now for six thousand years, and how far they have got through this purgatorial punishment is not yet settled. We have had, for the last year, so many questions proposed to us from correspondents on this system, that a little volume would be requisite to give them suitable answers. We are not at leisure, nor have we so much energy of mind, or body, as would be sufficient to give them even a respectful answer. We can only, in a summary way, acknowledge the receipt of them. Some, indeed, speak with as much certainty upon this subject as if they had just finished and gone through this purgatorial chastisement, and visited our world fraught with intelligence from Hades. They have discovered that all the caveats and threats in the New Testament are like the bugbears, and stories of ghosts and witches, which nurses tell to their peevish children when they would scare them to sleep. They tell lies; but it is with a good intention. They know there are no ghosts nor witches to disturb the children; but it would not be safe to tell them so. It is necessary to lie. Just so, when the apostles and the Saviour spoke of *aionion* or everlasting punishment, and of *aionion* or everlasting destruction, they knew there was no such thing; but they found that men could not be governed or managed without those bugbears, and were under the necessity of doing as the nurses aforesaid. They were under the necessity of telling lies from a good intention. They used such words and phrases in representing the duration of the punishment of the wicked, as they used in representing the continuance of the happiness of the righteous; yet they knew that the one was to terminate some fifty thousand years hence, while the other would never end. I have sometimes thought that it was exceedingly ungrateful in those knowing ones to disclose the secret. For if God was so kind to them as to afford them a special revelation for their own comfort, while he evidently holds out tremendous prospects to the wicked *in terrorem*, it is unkind on their part, to blab out

the secret, and thus divest the governor of the world, of the most puissant means of keeping it safe for the righteous to live in it. They seem to act the part of an intruder into the family of a matron who was succeeding pretty well in managing her restive children, by the terrors of ghosts and wizards, but the intruder tells them their mother is deceiving them; and thus the little pests scream out afresh, and bid defiance to all the ghosts and demons in the nation.—I say there is such a similarity in the cases, that we cannot avoid associating them in our mind, and we think it not unreasonable to inscribe them on paper.

I know the mighty war of words that can be paraded on any subject. Since Peter De Alvo wrote forty volumes on the nativity of the Messiah, I am afraid to enter the list with those worthy champions, if it were only on one of Horn Tooke's *ifs*. The Universalists have a pretty theme too—the benevolence of God, and the ultimate felicity of every creature, and thousands will hear them gladly.\* When a few weeks ago I visited the Baltimore penitentiary, and saw more than three hundred and fifty convicts suffering for their evil deeds, it struck me what a fine popular topic it would have been there to have announced to the suffering miscreants, that while the lawyers, judges, and their keepers, made them believe that the governor and the laws of the state required their continuance there for life, it was all craft and policy; that neither the moral character of the governor, nor the just exposition of the laws, would authorize any such long and cruel treatment. No, no. His character and his promulgations require that if you only feel sorry for what you have done and promise to do better, you will be set at liberty in a few days or hours. I say, something like this would have been a popular topic in such a place, and I am sure if I could have harangued them thus, under specious circumstances, I would have had many to hear me gladly, and to wish that it were true.

I do not, however, think that the Universalists are sinners above all others, in that they have run to one extreme, because some sectaries have run into the opposite. When I hear one man talk about his elect and reprobate infants, and little ones in hell not a span long; and hear another describing the flight of the demons from Stygian darkness, and representing the Devil and his messengers ascending to that heaven whence they were once excluded; I view them both alike—each mounted on his winged horse, and attempting to soar beyond the regions of re-

\* And yet the benevolence of God, on which Universalists so often talk, is a lame benevolence on their own principles.—They are much concerned for the character of the Divine benevolence, and the standard by which they adjust it condemns their own system. They must, and they ought, to banish from this world and from the next, any such an idea of God, as that of vengeance, and teach that neither vengeance nor punishment belong to the Lord.—For so long as they teach a purgatorial punishment of ten or fifty thousand years continuance after death, so long they destroy their own arguments drawn from the Divine benevolence. For if God can, on their own theory, be so benevolent in making men unhappy so long, it will be difficult to show why he cannot be benevolent in lengthening it out for another age, or for ages of ages, *ad infinitum*. In short, while they talk so much about the cruelty of other systems, they ought to divest their own system of so much of it, and deny future punishment altogether; and even then their system will be imperfect: for, to be consistent, they must show that all the pains, afflictions, and miseries of this world, constitute perfect happiness: and that will be a hard task—for the testimony of our senses will come in their way. But until they reconcile present evils to their system of Divine benevolence, it is in vain to object against them who say that God will punish the wicked, and bless the righteous, hereafter.



velation. Because A disapproves the theory of B on any subject, I am not convinced that A's theory is correct. It is a bad way to correct one extreme by running into another. One may as well be wrecked on Scylla as on Charybdis.

But, to change my voice, I would earnestly request those preachers of universal deliverance from hell, to stop and think how far the drift and scope of their efforts correspond with the obvious drift and scope of the preachings found in the New Testament. As Mr. Kneeland will have it, *aionion* life, and *aionion* death, or *aionion* destruction, are the mighty and majestic sanctions of the gospel of Jesus the Messiah. Now without saying a word upon his translation, if such it may be called, (and I have it now on the table before me, and Griesbach lying under it) it must be admitted that the bible always holds out something terrible to the wicked, to them who disbelieve and disobey Jesus the King, at his coming to judge the world. This, I say, must be, and, I believe, is, admitted, by all Universalists. Now, if it be admitted, as it must be, and as it most generally is, that the wicked shall be cast off from the presence of God and his holy messengers, into inconceivable and inexpressible anguish and misery, in the judgment; it is all idle to talk and contend about the termination of it. There is neither days, weeks, nor months, in that state. There is no standard conceivable, nor revealed, by which the length or continuance can be measured. If they are damned or condemned at all, it is in vain, on rational principles, to attempt to date it in a world where there is no calendar; and we are very sure that all the Universalists on earth cannot produce one sentence in all the revelation of God that says any thing about the termination of the punishment of the wicked. The bible often tells us of its commencement; but not once of its end. It is wise for us not to live upon conjectures, nor to build systems upon dreams and visions, which may cover us and our children in the ruins, and one day cause us to exclaim—It would have been better for us that we had never been born.—I am content to be assured that whosoever hears the gospel and believes and obeys it, *shall be saved*, and that whosoever hears it and disbelieves it, *shall be damned*.—I know no gospel in proclaiming to sinners on earth that after they are damned in judgment, they may, by a long series of awful punishment, be brought to repentance, and be delivered from hell. This I am sure is no gospel in this world, and what it might be if announced in Hades or Gehenna, or by whom it could be preached there, I will not, I dare not, conjecture.—But of one thing we are assured, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; and an awful experiment to attempt to relax or weaken the glorious and tremendous sanctions of the gospel of his grace.

EDITOR.

#### The Textuaries.

The scrap doctors or text expositors have not only very generally obscured the words they proposed to illustrate, but they have made their office accessible to every novice, and introduced a band of "public preachers" that are a disgrace to the age in which we live. Any body with, or without common sense, can become a scrap doctor. A man that can neither read nor spell can "preach a sermon on a text, or preach from a text." I am authorized to state, as a well attested fact, that, not long since, in the District of Columbia, hard by the capital of the United

States, where all the heads of department live, and all foreigners resort, a certain textuary did take for his text the words of a wicked man, found in Matthew 25: the false accusation of the wicked servant who told his lord—"You are an austere man." This was the text. The preacher could not spell well, and he made it, "You are an *oyster* man." But the misfortune was, "he raised his whole doctrine" on the word *oyster*. In his exordium, for he too was an orator, he told his audience that his object was to show how fitly the Saviour was compared to an oyster-man, or oyster-catcher. Accordingly his method was—1st. To show the coincidence or resemblance between his Saviour and an oyster-man. 2d. To point out how suitably oysters represented sinners. 3d. To demonstrate how beautifully the *tongs* which the oyster-man uses to take up oysters, represented "ministers of the gospel." 4th. To prove that the oyster-man's boat was a fit emblem of the gospel and of a "gospel church," into which the oysters or sinners are put when caught or converted. His fifth head I have forgotten; but perhaps it was to show how the cooking and eating of oysters represented the management and discipline of those sinners caught by those ministers of the gospel. He concluded with a few practical hints according to custom.

What a happy mistake was this and how fortunate for the audience! And yet he was called and sent by God to preach his gospel!!!!

I once heard, with my own ears, a pious textuary deliver an introductory sermon to an assembly of divines from the words of the devil, or from what was equivalent—the words of a damsel speaking from the impulse of a spirit of divination. The soothsayer said of the apostles—"These are the servants of the most high God which show to us the way of salvation." He did not "stick so well to his text" as the aforesaid textuary; for while the divining damsel applied her words to the apostles, the divine preacher appropriated them to himself and such folks as the oyster expositor.

A pious divine, who may, for aught I know, be yet dubbed D. D. whose spirit within him was vehemently moved at the knots of ribbon on the ladies' bonnets, ransacked from Genesis to Jude for a text to afford a pretext for giving scope to the fervor of his soul against those obnoxious knots, found the following words—"Let him that is on the house *top not come down*." Not being a perfect speller, though a good preacher; and wishing to have a text just to the point, he selected these four words—"Top not come down." *Pro causa euphoniæ* he prefixed a *k* to the negative particle and converted it into a noun theological. His method was natural and easy—1st. He proposed, to explain the top knots. 2d. To give a divine command for their demolition. 3d. To expatiate on the reasonableness of the injunction, *come down*. 4th. To denounce the eternal perdition of the disobedient. He, too, was a preacher who appropriated the words of Isaiah: "How beautiful are the feet of them that publish the gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things." He was sent by God—if we could believe him.

Now, courteous reader, will you allow me to say what I am sure is a fact; that I have heard hundreds of sermons, and read volumes of them, on texts, and from the learned too, which, though not so evidently ridiculous to every body, were really as absurd as the above.

EDITOR.

*To the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers.*

RESPECTED AND RESPECTABLE FRIENDS: You have, as a society, long contended against water baptism, on the supposition that it once was, but is now done away. The Spirit that moves you, has moved me to address you, not, indeed, to provoke you to a controversy with me, nor to speak to you as some sectaries speak to you. I am not about to use the same arguments against your views, which you have often heard, and as often considered. But for some time past, that Spirit which has suggested so many good things to you, has suggested one consideration to me, which I am constrained, by it, to make known to you, believing it to be enough to settle all doubts on the subject of baptism. This consideration will appear the more weighty to you, inasmuch, as it is founded upon your own acknowledgments. I have never seen it presented to you by any of those who would slander you into a compliance with their clerical schemes. I intreat you to pay it due attention. It is this: You believe that there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. But the fooleries of your opponents drove you to say that this one baptism, is the baptism of the Spirit. Now if I can show that this one baptism cannot mean the baptism of the Spirit, you will, no doubt, admit that while there is but one baptism, you ought to submit to it. In the first place, then, I offer you this proposition: That no gift, operation, or influence, of the Spirit, was ever, by any inspired writer, called the baptism of the Holy Spirit, save what happened on Pentecost, and in the first calling of the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. If this be true, then this one baptism, of which Paul speaks, is an immersion in water.

Now, that this position may evidently appear to be true, it will be necessary to notice two points: First, That no man who was the subject of any gift, impression, influence, or operation of the Spirit of God, other than the Pentecostian, is said to have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. And, in the second place, that the promise of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, and its accomplishment, are, by the New Testament writers, exclusively applied to the times and places above specified. In illustration of the first point, it is only necessary to observe, that it is confessed that many of the Old Testament saints were the subjects of influences, gifts, and operations of the Spirit. By it the prophets spake, and by it the oracles were composed. Yet not one of these are said to have been baptized by the Holy Spirit. Again, during the ministry of John and labors of the Lord on earth, many persons, and especially the apostles, were the subjects of gifts, impressions, operations, and influences of the Spirit, yet those persons were not said to be, and, in fact, were not baptized, in the Spirit. For this plain reason, with all their gifts, they were the subjects of the promise, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire." To them was the spiritual baptism promised by the Saviour. The demonstration of the second point will confirm and establish the first.

*Acts i. 5.* The Saviour, after he rose from the dead, and just before his ascension into heaven, promised his disciples that they would soon be baptized in the Holy Spirit. His words are—"You shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence." Now, my dear friends, observe this baptism was then future, consequently all the spiritual influences they had hitherto experienced did not constitute this baptism, for why then should it be a matter of promise?

Please observe again, the time for its accomplishment is fixed and defined—"Not many days hence"—Pentecost was not many days hence. Not many days after the Lord's ascension they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, and in fire, *Acts 2.* Peter there and then demonstrated that this outpouring of the Spirit which put all the apostles and others fully under its influence, called on this account a baptism or immersion, was the accomplishment of former promises. This baptism was never repeated till God called the Gentiles. And in order to show his impartiality he made no difference between them and the Jews. Peter shows that there was no other outpouring of the Spirit from Pentecost till the calling of the Gentiles. "God, says he, gave the Gentiles the same gift that he did to us Jews at the beginning" of the reign of his Son, or of the christian age. There had been no outpouring from Pentecost till that time. Pentecost was the only day, and Jerusalem the only place, analogous to this. From all which it is apparent that no other gifts, operations, or influences of the Spirit from the beginning of the world till Pentecost are called the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and that no similar outpouring had intervened from the first calling of the Jews till the first calling of the Gentiles, and that the various graces, called the fruits of the Spirit, neither are nor can be called the baptism of the Spirit.

Once more observe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit, was to be a visible baptism. This the promise implied. We all know that the two occasions called the baptism of the Spirit were visible and brilliant—but, my friends, is your baptism of the Spirit visible or invisible? They were enveloped in fire and covered with tongues—And it is worthy of note that all the subjects of this baptism could instantaneously speak foreign languages which they never learned—Can the subjects of your spiritual baptism do this also?

Now the one baptism of which Paul speaks in the present time, when writing to the Ephesians, was not that past on Pentecost, nor can it, by any arguments deduced from scripture, be applied to any influences in our day, whether "ordinary or extraordinary." While then you admit that there is one baptism, and as you see it is not the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for which there is now no use nor promise; and which we have never seen as exhibited on those occasions; this one baptism is that in water; and you will, no doubt, remember that when Cornelius and his friends had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the great apostle Peter commanded them to be immersed in the name of the Lord. And I know you would rather say that it is more probable that George Fox might have erred than the apostle Peter.

Accept these hints from your friend,  
THE EDITOR.

MANY letters, like the following, are on file, and remain to be answered. This is one of the oldest date, and priority, in this respect, ought to be regarded.

V——s, August 29, 1825.

DEAR BROTHER,—For the last year past, I have been both a subscriber and a reader of your Christian Baptist. I think I have, upon many subjects, been much interested and benefited; and am of opinion that the principles which you advocate, will prove more and more interesting to the christian who inquires after the truth. You have, in some one of your numbers, suggested a plan for reading and understanding, more easily, the word of God. I have thought



it a good one, and immediately determined to pursue it. I have progressed as far as the Acts of the Apostles. And find some scriptures in the meaning of which I cannot satisfy myself; and from your disposition to make known the truth, I take the liberty of asking from you your views upon some verses which I shall put to you for explanation, believing that you will communicate your views of them to the public through your useful paper: *Matt. v. 22. 39. ch. vi. 25. ch. xix. 12.* The only way to serve God acceptably, according to my views of his character, is to do his will, and in order to do that will, we should understand what he requires of us in his written word.—Respectfully, &c.

Dear Brother,

A PARTIAL answer to your request is all I can give you at this time. A correct translation of Matthew v. 22, renders it more intelligible:—"Whosoever is vainly incensed against his brother shall be obnoxious to the judges; whosoever shall call him fool shall be obnoxious to the sanhedrim; but whosoever shall call him miscreant (or apostate wretch) shall be obnoxious to a Gehenna of fire," (or to burning alive in the vale of Hinnom.) The Saviour informs his disciples that while the Jews then only brought those guilty of actual murder before the judges; under his reign, the least degree of anger would subject a person to a punishment analogous to that which was usually inflicted by the inferior courts; that the expression of anger in the way of contempt of a brother should render the persons obnoxious to the punishment analogous to that inflicted by the sanhedrim, which was stoning to death; and that the highest expression of anger with the tongue should expose the transgressor to a punishment analogous to being burned alive in the vale of Hinnom. He, in this instance, as his method was, communicates the doctrine of his reign through the medium of existing customs, institutions, and avocations of men. He, through these allusions, teaches his disciples that every aberration from brotherly love would be taken cognizance of by him.—Anger in the heart, anger expressed in the way of contempt, and anger expressed with marked hatred. All laws, human and divine, award punishment proportioned to the crime or offence. His design in the context renders his meaning apparent, and teaches all the disciples that while he mercifully forgives the offences of those who confess their faults and forsake them, he severely scrutinizes their thoughts and words, with even more severity than men are wont to exhibit to the overt acts of iniquity.

Matthew vi. 25, becomes perfectly plain when fairly translated. Thus—"You cannot serve God and Riches. Therefore I charge you, be not anxious about your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, nor about your body what you shall wear."

The context gives the following as the spirit and design of Matthew xix. 12. The question was—Whether it were not better in some conditions to live unmarried. The Saviour answered, "They alone are capable of living thus on whom the power is conferred. For there are some persons who never had any desire to enter into the nuptial bonds. Others have been prevented by violence, and others from their zeal to publish the reign of heaven, have divested themselves of any such desire. Let him act this part who can act it." This is the spirit of the reply and the reasons for his answer. My limits will not permit me to be more particular at this time

Wishing you God speed in your inquiries, I am your brother in the search of truth. EDITOR.

THE following Ode we understand was written by an emigrant to this country, who, in the midst of misfortunes in a foreign land, was brought to remember the blessings he enjoyed when under the pious tutelage of his christian parents. To what extent the tuition and example of the parents was a blessing to the son, we have not yet learned; but one thing is certain, that it is seldom in vain.—ED.

#### To the Family Bible.

How painfully pleasing the fond recollection  
Of youthful connexion and innocent joy,  
While bless'd with parental advice and affection,  
Surrounded with mercies and peace from on high.  
I still view the chairs of my father and mother,  
The seats of their offspring as ranged on each hand,  
And the richest of books, that excels every other—  
The Family Bible that lay on the stand—  
The old-fashion'd Bible, the dear blessed Bible,  
The Family Bible that lay on the stand.

The Bible, the volume of God's inspiration,  
At morning and evening could yield us delight;  
And the prayer of our sire was a sweet invocation  
For mercies by day and protection by night.  
Our hymn of thanksgiving with harmony swelling  
All warm from the hearts of a family band,  
Hath raised us from earth to the rapturous dwelling  
Described in the Bible that lay on the stand—  
The old-fashion'd Bible, the dear blessed Bible,  
The Family Bible that lay on the stand.

Ye scenes of tranquility, long have we parted,  
My hopes almost gone, and my parents no more;  
In sorrow and sighing I live broken hearted,  
And wander unknown on a far distant shore.  
But how can I doubt a bless'd Saviour's protection,  
Forgetful of gifts from his bountiful hand;  
Then let me with patience receive the correction,  
And think on the Bible that lay on the stand—  
The old-fashion'd Bible, the dear blessed Bible,  
The Family Bible that lay on the stand.

No. 6.] JANUARY 2, 1826.

Review of "Remarks on the Rise, Use and Unlawfulness of Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the church of God—By JOHN M. DUNCAN, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Tammany street, Baltimore."—Part Second.

THE more deeply we drink into the spirit of the New Testament, the less we relish the dry and lifeless dogmas of human creeds. As we ascend in clear and comprehensive views of the Holy Oracles, human formularies descend in our estimation. Hence we invariably find an ardent zeal for human systems, accompanied with glaring ignorance of the revelation of God, and true veneration for the records of God's grace, is always attended with intelligence and liberality.

The following extracts from Mr. Duncan's work, so fully confirm these sentiments; so exactly correspond with many pieces published in this work, that we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of presenting them to our readers.—Their value will apologize for their length; and, indeed, we have done violence to the author in garbling his pages, and have rather detracted from the force and beauty of his remarks, by selecting only a few sentences of many which ought to appear together in the order he has given them. We wish our readers to have some tolerable idea of the work, and hope that many of them may be induced to add this book of Mr. Duncan's to their library. These selections are made from page 184 to page 208. ED. C. E.

"Our second principle is, that the bible being the word of God, it must necessarily be precisely suited to human beings as sinful and fallen; and therefore it embraces in its provisions

all that is peculiar, either in their character or condition."

"And what is the Bible, for which we plead so ardently? It is not merely a high wrought eulogy upon the character of Jehovah; but it is his condescension to men upon earth. It is not a stern display of abstract righteousness; but it is the mingling together of justice and peace, of mercy and truth. It is not the impracticable requisition of absolute purity, made with an un pitying eye and an oppressive hand; but it is the proclamation of "the righteousness of faith," that glorious principle of which angels and the redeemed shall talk together throughout eternity. It is not the statute of an indescribable sovereignty, which no prayer can relax and which no tears can soften; but it is the opening of the prison doors, it is a universal call, it is an indiscriminate overture;—whosoever will, may come; and whosoever comes, shall in no wise be cast out; and all its agents act upon its own liberal commission. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears, say Come. And let him that is athirst, Come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." None of our Calvinistic brethren, as they may be pleased to denominate themselves, will halt at the foregoing statement. If they do, let them pause and reflect whether, under the guise of Calvinism, they have not sunk into a system of the most haughty, joyless, and chilling fatalism?"

"Again, the Bible is intended to be a system of practical morals. It reveals not doctrines for the sake of doctrine, but as they may serve to fulfil practical purposes; or it never was designed to establish theory independent of practice.—God did not send his only begotten Son into our world merely to display the brightness of his glory; he veiled all that glory that men might look at it, and sent his Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh," that men whose moral perceptions were very low by reason of the "weakness of the flesh," might have an "express image of his person," which they could adore with a degree of intelligence consistent with their infirmities. The Holy Spirit has not come down merely to astonish by his own mysterious movements; his official work is to build up a temple on earth for the habitation of God—a spiritual house, resting on Jesus as a living stone, and into which he inserts, as living stones, all whom he sanctifies. The gospel, even when angels have tuned their harps to its lofty strains, is not simply, Glory to God in the highest; but it is, Peace on earth and good will toward men."

The simplicity of the Bible, or its happy adaptation to the circumstances of mankind, is one of the most striking proofs of its divine original. That the blind should receive their sight and the lame walk, that the lepers should be cleansed and the deaf hear, and that the dead should be raised up, form an irresistible demonstration in favor of any thing they can be brought to prove; but when the Redeemer stated all these things in testimony of his own pretensions, he did not think the train of evidence complete, and added, "the poor have the gospel preached to them." The heavenly visions which he had seen with his Father, and the particulars of which he came down from heaven to reveal on earth, are made plain and distinct to the human mind; level to the comprehension, not only of the divine, the philosopher and the scholar, but to the poor. They are like Habakkuk's message, made plain upon tables, so that he who runs may read. It is this very thing which reveals the author of the bible with peculiar glory; for infinite wisdom is ever

displayed by the perfect adaptation of means to an end. Instead, then, of needing any of those perplexing summaries, which different religious denominations have given us as the product of their own wisdom, the bible, by its own plainness, evinces its own perfection, and recommends itself to the most uninformed, as a sure guide to everlasting life. If in it "there are depths where an elephant might swim," there are in it also "shoals where a lamb may wade." If it administers strong meat to those who are of full age, it serves the babe with milk. If it prescribes perfection to its reader, it begins by communicating first principles; and he who has learned rightly to divide it, has learned how to give to each his portion of meat in due season."

"And what, we ask, would become of the mass of mankind—what of the majority of professing christians—what of our children, whose very praise in the presence of the Redeemer may be that from childhood they knew the Holy Scriptures which are capable to make even them wise to salvation, if the bible was not thus modified to meet the imbecility of human powers?"

"It is manifest that the scriptures must be plain to the human mind, or they can be of no use to the poor; and the mass of mankind could have no divine book which they can profitably read. It must be a volume suited to the illiterate and the busy, the bond and the free; fitted to the tottering old man, bowed down with years, who has no time to waste on our speculations, and to the young child that cannot comprehend them. It must be a book which the mother can explain to her little ones, and from which the father can read to them, under the sanctions of divine authority, a morning and evening lesson. Say it is otherwise, and then the fact that to the poor the gospel is preached, is no longer a proof of the divine authenticity of the scriptures, seeing they cannot be put to that use as a system of moral truths. To them its page is unintelligible; its very doctrines mysterious, its propositions unformed; its promises irrelevant; and, by a reference to a human creed, imposed upon them as the meaning of the scriptures, *their faith must stand in the wisdom of men.*"

"If, then, we are right in saying that God has in the bible given us moral truth in the best form it could wear, considering the character of the being for whom it has been prepared—and who can say we are not right? Then, under what principle have synods and councils undertaken to alter that form? For our creeds and confessions of faith do take the truth which God has revealed out of its scriptural connexions; and they do modify it according to the conceptions of the men who make them, or the prejudices and feelings of the age which creates and enforces them. And why do they this? It certainly becomes them to give the best of all reasons for so eccentric an adventure. Can they make truth more tangible? Have they the promise of the Spirit to superintend their deliberations, when they undertake to revise and correct God's institutions? Have they any divine promise to guarantee a good result? Or do they suppose they have a sufficient warrant to take such a step, from the fact that they have a sectarian object to accomplish, or that the interest of a voluntary association may require it? Then they must remember that they have the very same argument to meet in application to these voluntary associations; and to justify themselves for so dividing the church of the living God, and altering her external form. And we really do



not wonder that these two things are put together; for as Paul argues with the Hebrews, "The priesthood being changed there is of necessity a change also of the law."

"But perhaps it may be denied that our creeds do alter the form in which truth is brought to bear upon the conscience. We must then make our assertion good. Are not our creeds professed summaries? And what is a summary? Is it the same thing with that which it abridges, or is it a different thing? If the original and the abstract be drawn out by different hands, will they present the same intellectual image? Is this summary needed? Did the Master give us one, or empower us to make one, because his bible was a deficient instrument of operation upon the human spirit? Every man at a glance may perceive that he has not framed the scriptures upon the same principle on which our theological systems are constructed. The bible is not a collection of abstract propositions, systematized into regular order, nor is it a schedule of difficult metaphysical subjects, arranged under general titles, such as the attributes of God, the divine decrees, the perseverance of the saints, &c. On the contrary, it is a transcript of social transactions; it is an exhibition of human life; it is that species of composition which all the world knows is most interesting to the mass of mankind. It is true some lofty speculators, some profound thinkers, who are capable to reason both matter and spirit out of God's creation, might prefer a volume of mental abstractions; but then the reader must remember that the bible was written for the *poor*; that it was intended to throw a beam of the life that shall never end upon the infant mind; to cheer the humble, the lowly, and the contrite spirit; and, while the dews of its blessing are falling upon the dying old man, to stretch the bow of the covenant of grace across the firmament of truth, that his closing eyes may be opened upon the cloudless light of an eternal day. Had such an epitome or compend of moral truths, as our creeds profess to be, been the best form of revelation by which the human mind could be spiritually enlightened, doubtless God himself would have adopted that form; for he declares that he has done for man all that he could do for him; and indeed, he has too much pity and compassion for this fallen child of his love to leave any thing undone which could have been done. If he had intended to write a book for a race of philosophers, instead of rejecting such for being wise in their own conceits; and if philosophers really know how to make systems, or are themselves best instructed in that way, doubtless he would have given them his revelation in a more logical form. Most certainly, however, he has not done it; and the inference fairly is, that our systems are constructed on false views of human nature, or that our creeds are not at all fitted for man in his present state. There is a better way of teaching mankind the science of morals: for Jehovah himself, who needs not that any should tell him what is in man, has adopted another way. Surely we may safely follow where God leads, and to imitate his example never can jeopard the prosperity or peace of his church."

"The practical result of our creeds confirms our argument. Can children understand the abstract propositions contained in the Shorter Catechism? Have not scientific men long since learned that every thing must be simplified, and, if possible, illustrated by example, in order to interest, impress, and benefit the infantile mind? Are they not descending from their own lofty

eminence, and, taking these little immortals by the hand, leading them up step by step? And shall we leave their moral nature uncultivated, or fatigue their tender spirits by the incessant repetition of things which they do not understand? Are our grown up christians better treated by this system of perplexed legislation? Do not these creeds drag away the christian mind from scriptural exposition to dwell upon polemic propositions! Do they not make it necessary for us to contend with those whom we ought to love; and even to divide families, as if the husband and the wife, the parent and the child, worshipped different Gods? Do they not present truth in philosophical forms, about which men are every where at liberty to reason according to their own apprehensions? Do they not teach men to feel comparatively irresponsible about religious things, because they consider themselves to be reasoning with man about his notions, and not with God against his institutions? Let the reader judge for himself whether we do not recite facts. As Calvinists, we almost intuitively shrink away from being thought Arminians; and as Arminians we are equally frightened by a charge of Calvinism.—The past age has made a controversy between these two sets of opinions exceedingly popular, and our creeds have served to perpetuate strife! He is thought to be a clergyman of secondary consideration, and to possess talents of a very inferior order, who cannot perspicuously arrange and skilfully discuss the *five points*; while on the other hand, Whitby and the Lime-street Lectures have obtained immortal honor. Neither party seems to know that if they would cease to contend, and declare what they are honestly convinced is in the bible, they would blend in most perfect harmony, as soon as long established habits, running throughout society, could admit so happy a revolution. But they have formed their opinions; they have chosen their theological system; they have entered into their ecclesiastical connexions; and of all things that are inimical to harmony, these voluntary associations are the worst—because by them all society is thrown into commotion. It is really admirable to hear how controversialists, belonging to different voluntary associations, will treat a scripture text which they have abstracted from its own relations, and how clearly they will demonstrate it to utter their own opinions. Who does not feel some concern when he hears a minister of the gospel endeavoring to establish a doctrine which every one knows is employed to evolve a sectarian, rather than a scriptural principle? And who, that has even thought dispassionately upon the subject, would not prefer to have the bible explained to him as other things are explained, than hear the most eloquent discussion on a sectarian tenet? Surely the study of the scriptures, and an effort to make men feel truth as spoken by divine wisdom, and enforced by divine authority, would entirely change the complexion of such ministrations, and impel the human mind into trains of thinking and habits of application much more spiritual and edifying. We say again, let the reader judge for himself; the whole subject is presented to him in real life; it is pressed out to its very extreme; and he may even hear, as an argument in favor of theological strife, that division is necessary to unity. A lovely paradox! An unexpected, but happy union of contraries! Its framers are fairly entitled to all the credit of its ingenuity. We dare not envy them their happy talent for invention."

THE Synod of Baltimore have again proved that they make and hold the confession and formulary as authoritative rules of faith and practice, and as terms of communion between Christ and his disciples. The following is positive proof thereof.

"The Rev. John M. Duncan, of Baltimore, and the Rev. Charles M'Lean, of Gettysburgh, in this state, have both declined the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian church in the United States, on the ground that they object to creeds and confessions as terms of christian or ministerial fellowship; and the Synod of Baltimore have accordingly declared their congregations vacant, and have put them under the care of the respective presbyteries of Baltimore and Carlisle."—*Pittsburgh Mercury*, Nov. 30.

So Messrs. Duncan and M'Lean are to be viewed and treated as heathen men and publicans, because they aver that there is but one authoritative rule of christian faith and practice, and that this is the Bible. But behold they have declared their congregation vacant! This is another acceptance of the word "vacant." They have vacant territories in their church, with only two hundred thousand inhabitants on them; vacant churches, because the pulpit is sometimes empty; and vacant congregations when their pulpit is every day filled with a good man who happens not to be orthodox in this article of the fallible rule of faith and practice.

"They can create and they destroy."

They have annihilated Messrs. Duncan and M'Lean, as well as paganized them. Great are their tender mercies for those transgressors, and inexpressible their sympathies for their dear and precious congregations. We have it from good authority in Baltimore, that Mr. Duncan's congregation was as unanimously determined to adhere to the sentiments in his book as any congregation of orthodox christians in the country is determined to hold fast its form of sound words imported from Scotland on board the ship *Enterprise*, and guarded by two frigates laden with soldiers and munitions of war. Ed. C. B.

#### *On the Rights of Laymen.—No. 1.*

For more than half a century past, no theme has been more popular, no topic has been more fully discussed, than the rights of men. The result has been, that very generally, in the New World at least, it is conceded that all men are born to equal rights. But our theme is not the rights of men, but the rights of laymen.

Some, no doubt, will inquire, What is a layman? We answer, a man is the creature of God, but a layman is the creature of priests. God made men, but priests made laymen. In the religious world we often hear of clergy and laity. These are terms of Grecian extraction. The term clergy denotes the Lord's lot, or people; the term laity denotes the common herd of mankind, or the clergy's lot or people. We shall attend first to the inalienable rights of the laity, and secondly to the inalienable rights of the brethren in Christ.

In the first place, a layman has a right to consider himself as possessed of five senses, viz. seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling. If misfortune or vice has not deprived him of the use of any of them, he is always to bear in mind that his Creator gave him eyes, ears, a mouth, nose, and hands, and that he designed he should use them all. These five senses completely adapt man to this present world. As an animal, he has no use for a sixth sense. His eye feasts

upon light, his ear upon sound, his mouth, tongue, and palate, upon tastes, his nose upon odors, and his hands inform him of the heat and cold, roughness and smoothness, hardness, and softness, and all such properties of the bodies around him. These all serve him as guards and defences, as well as minister to his enjoyments. As in a world of matter his whole body is liable to many inconveniences, his Creator has transfused through his whole system the sense of feeling, which exists most exquisitely in his hands. In one sentence, there is not a single property in any material thing of any use to man, that is not distinguishable by some one or all of these senses. Now a layman is endowed with all these senses as well as a priest. Therefore he is to use them, and believe their testimony in preference to any thing a priest tells him. For example: If a priest tell him that he can turn wine into blood, and bread into flesh, the layman must taste them, and if this blood have still the taste of wine, and this flesh of bread, he must believe his senses in preference to the priest's tongue. For God gave him those senses, and they are to be relied on more firmly than the words of any man. Again, when a priest tells him that he immerses or washes a person in water, when he only besprinkles his face or his hands, he must believe the testimony of his eyes, and not the lips of the priest, for his eyes are more to be trusted than the lips of a thousand priests. Now it is the inalienable right of every layman to exercise his five senses, and never to be argued out of them or to believe any thing contrary to them.

But let it be remembered that those five senses give a man no other intelligence than what concerns the material world around him. They cannot introduce him to an acquaintance with a world of spirits, or a future state. But in order to fit him for this, God has given him another class of faculties which exist in his spirit, as those senses exist in his body. These faculties are all comprized in one sentence, which affirms man to be a reasonable being. But each of the faculties which constitute a reasonable being, are as distinct from one another as are his five senses. The eye and the ear are not more distinct than perception and reflection, than memory and judgment. These being within the man, are not so easily apprehended as his senses which are without. The spirit of a man dwells within him, and as through windows, views, through the five senses, the objects around him. What it cannot perceive through one of those windows, it can discern through another. Besides this, it can look upon itself and become conscious of its own actions. But these are not so obvious to all mankind. The mass of men attend much more to what is passing without than to what is passing within them, and therefore know more of the former than of the latter.

But of all the faculties with which the spirit of man is endowed, none exalt him so high, none put him in possession of intelligence so important as the *faculty of believing*. Whether this faculty be a combination of other faculties, or one distinct from all others, is not worthy of a moment's investigation, as every man knows that he *can* believe, and *does* believe human testimony when it possesses certain attributes. Indeed, all that we do know, and all that we are assured of beyond the narrow sphere of our own experience and observation, all that we know of the past, the present, and the future, beyond the limits of our horizon, we have acquired by this faculty of believing.



As men spoke before they wrote, and as intelligence respecting facts is reported before it can be written, the ear is the first medium through which testimony reaches the spirit of man. Consequently our conviction, or assurance of things reported, commonly called *faith*, "comes by hearing," or by the ear. Through this window of the ear the spirit of man sees incomparably more objects and acquires incalculably more information than by the other four windows or avenues of information.

Reading what is written is a sort of hearing by the eye. If the assurance of things unseen be acquired from reading, it derogates nothing from the rational and biblical truth, that "faith comes by hearing;" for writing is a substitute for speaking, and reading is but a substitute for hearing. I would not spend time in illustrating a matter so plain, were it not, that some of the priests, in order to enhance their services, have boasted that faith comes by hearing, and not by reading. By hearing *them* too, rather than by reading Paul!\*

But as the eye of man would be of no use to him if there was no sun or no light, so the faculty or power of believing testimony would be of no consequence if there was no testimony to be believed. And although he may have testimony concerning things present and visible, which is of much importance in the present life; yet, if the exercise and use of this faculty is to be confined to human testimony respecting present objects, still he is completely in the dark as respects the unseen and future world, and but little elevated above a bee, a beaver, or an elephant. Now of the unseen and future world he can have no human testimony, properly so called; for no man has returned from the unseen world and testified any thing about it; and if we have no testimony from God concerning the unseen and future state, the faculty of believing is of no more consequence than the sense of seeing, as regards the world of spirits.

And if, upon the hypothesis of the truth of "natural theology," a man could arrive at the knowledge of the being, and of some of the perfections of God, yet still every thing concerning his will, and the future destinies of man, is unknown and unknowable. But the Bible is to man the sun and light of the world of spirits, or of the unseen and future state. The testimony of God is addressed to, and fitted for, this faculty of believing, with which he has endowed man, and of which he cannot be divested so long as he is rational, except by his own depravity—as by an abandoned course a man may destroy, or sear his own conscience until it is past feeling, so he may abuse his faculty of believing, so far as to believe a lie and reject the truth.

But in making a Bible, the author of it has indirectly given us some of the best lessons in the world upon this faculty of believing. By attaching to it, and stamping upon it, and working into it certain evidences of its origin, he has taught us what a being like man requires, in order to giving full credence to testimony, human or divine. In adapting this book to fallen men, he has shown us what this faculty of believing now is, and not what it once was. And he has given so much of this sort of evidence as to render every man inexcusable who continues in unbelief.

To conclude this item, we would add, that by our reasoning faculties we are to try and deter-

\* "God (says the Catechism of this meridian) maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of salvation."

mine whether the book called the Bible came from heaven or from men; and having determined that God is its author, we are then to receive its instructions and implicitly to follow them. It is, then, in the second place, the inalienable right of all laymen to examine the sacred writings for themselves, and to exercise this faculty with which God has endowed them, and not to believe what the church believes, nor how the church believes, because the church believes it; but to judge and act for, and from themselves.

A BEREAN.

### *A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.*

#### No. X.

#### The Fellowship.

Η ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ, *koinonia*, translated fellowship, communion, communication, contribution, and distribution, occurs frequently in the apostolic writings. King James' translators have rendered this word by all those terms. A few specimens shall be given. It is translated by them fellowship, *Acts* ii. 42. "They continued steadfastly in the fellowship." *1 Cor.* i. 9. "The fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ." *2 Cor.* vi. 14. "What fellowship has light with darkness." *Gal.* ii. 9. "The right hand of fellowship." *Philip.* iii. 10. "The fellowship of his sufferings." *1 John* i. 3. "Fellowship with the Father." *2 Cor.* viii. 4. "The fellowship of the ministering to the saints."

They have sometimes translated it by the word communion, *1 Cor.* x. 16. "The communion of his blood.—" "The communion of his body." *2 Cor.* xiii. 14. "The communion of the Holy Spirit."

They have also used the term communicate or communication, *Heb.* xiii. 16. "To communicate," or "Of the communication be not forgetful, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Where it evidently means alms giving in other places, they have chosen the term distribution, *2 Cor.* ix. 13. "For your liberal distribution to them, and to all."

They have also selected the term contribution as an appropriate translation, *Rom.* xv. 26. "For it has pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem."

It is most evident, from the above specimens, that the term ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ imports a joint participation in giving or receiving; and that a great deal depends on the selection of an English term, in any particular passage, to give a particular turn to the meaning of that passage. For instance, "The right hand of contribution" would be a very uncouth and unintelligible phrase. "The contribution of the Holy Spirit," would not be "much better." Again, had they used the word contribution when the sense required it, it would have greatly aided the English reader. For example—*Acts* ii. 42. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in the breaking of bread, in the contribution, and in prayers," is quite as appropriate and intelligible, and there is no reason which would justify their rendering *Rom.* xv. 26 as they have done, that would not equally justify their having rendered *Acts* ii. 42. as we have done. In *Rom.* xv. the context obliged them to select the word contribution, and this is the reason why they should have chosen the same term in *Acts* ii. 42. The term fellowship is too vague in this passage, and, indeed, altogether improper: for the Jerusalem congregation had fellowship in breaking bread, and in prayers, as well as in contributing; and as the historian contradistinguishes the *koinonia* (or

"fellowship," as they have it) from prayer and breaking bread, it is evident he did not simply mean either communion or fellowship as a distinct part of the christian practice or of their social worship.

Thompson has chosen the word community. This, though better than the term fellowship, is too vague, and does not coincide with the context, for the community of goods which existed in this congregation is afterwards mentioned by the historian apart from what he has told us in the 42d verse—There can be no objection made to the term contribution, either as an appropriate meaning of the term *KOINONIA*, or as being suitable in this passage, which would require an elaborate refutation, and we shall, therefore, unhesitatingly adopt it as though king James' translators had given it here as they have elsewhere.

As christians, in their individual and social capacity, are frequently exhorted by the apostles to contribute to the wants of the poor, to distribute to the necessities of the saints: as the congregation at Jerusalem continued steadfastly in this institution; and as other congregations elsewhere were commended for these acceptable sacrifices, it is easy to see and feel that it is incumbent on all christians as they have ability, and as circumstances require, to follow their example in this benevolent institution of him who became poor that the poor might be made rich by him.

That every christian congregation should follow the examples of those which were set in order by the apostles, is, I trust, a proposition which few of those who love the founder of the christian institution, will question. And that the apostles did give orders to the congregations in Galatia and to the Corinthians to make a weekly contribution for the poor saints, is a matter that cannot be disputed, see 1 Cor. xvi. 1. That the christian congregations did then keep a treasury for those contributions, is, I conceive, evident from the original of 1 Cor. xvi. 1, which Mac-knight correctly renders in the following words:—"On the first day of every week let each of you lay somewhat by itself, according as he may have prospered, putting it into the treasury, that when I come there may be then no collections."

Some who profess to follow the institutions of Jesus Christ, as found in the New Testament, do not feel it incumbent on them to make a weekly contribution for the poor, and urge in their justification, among other excuses, the two following: 1st. "In these United States we have no poor;" and, in the second place, "It was only to some churches, and with reference to some exigencies, that those injunctions were published." The Saviour said, "The poor you have always with you;" but it seems we have lived to see the day when this is not true, in the bounds of the New World. "But," says another, "the poor clergy exact from us all we can contribute, and all the cents which our mourning bags every week collect, are lost in this vast abyss!"—"Two wrongs will not make one right!"

That some churches, on some particular occasions, were peculiarly called upon to contribute every week for one definite object, is no doubt true, and that similar contingencies may require similar exertions now as formerly, is equally true. But still this does not say that it is only on such occasions that the charities of christians must be kept awake, and that they may slumber at all other times. Nor does it prove that it is no part of the christian religion to make constant provision for the poor. This would be to contradict the letter and spirit of almost all the New Tes-

tament. For, in truth, God never did institute a religion on earth that did not look with the kindest aspect towards the poor—which did not embrace, as its best good works, acts of humanity and compassion: In the day of judgment, the works particularized as of highest eminence, and most conspicuous virtue, are not, You have built meeting-houses—you have founded colleges, and endowed professorships—you have educated poor pious youths, and made them priests—you gave your parsons good livings; but, You visited the sick, you waited on the prisoner, you fed the hungry, you clothed the naked christian.

But some excuse themselves by shewing their zeal for sound doctrine. "We," say they, "do not build colleges nor give fat livings to priests." No, indeed, you neither contribute to rich nor poor; you do not give to things sacred, or profane; you communicate not to the things of God, nor the things of men. You keep all to yourselves. Your dear wives and children engross all your charities. Yes, indeed, you are sound in faith, and orthodox in opinion. But your good works are not registered in the book of God's remembrance, and there will be none of them read in the day of rewards.

But this is not my design. *The contribution*, the weekly contribution—the distribution to the poor saints, we contend is a part of the religion of Jesus Christ. Do not be startled at this use of the term *religion*. We have the authority of an apostle for it. James says, "Pure and undefiled religion in the presence of God, even the Father, is this—viz. to visit (and relieve) the orphans and widows in their afflictions, and to keep unspotted by the vices of the world."—There is a *sacrifice* with which God is well pleased, even now, when victims bleed no more.—James has told it here, and Paul reminded the Hebrew christians of it. And when any one undertakes to show that our present circumstances forbid our attending to a weekly contribution for the poor, whether in the congregation or out of it, we shall undertake to show that either we ourselves are proper objects of christian charity, or we are placed in circumstances which deprive us of that reward mentioned in Matthew xxv. And if there is need for private and individual acts of charity, there is more need for a systematic and social preparation for, and exhibition of, congregational contributions. But let it be remembered, that it is always "accepted according to what a man has, and not according to what he has not."

I shall close these remarks with an extract from one of the best fragments of antiquity yet extant, which was first published when christians were under the persecutions of Pagan Rome. It is from an apology of one of the first bishops, which being addressed to a Roman emperor, shows the order of the christian church before it was greatly corrupted. It is equally interesting as respects the weekly breaking of bread and the weekly contribution. Justin Martyr's Second Apology, page 96—"On Sunday all christians in the city or country meet together, because this is the day of our Lord's resurrection, and then we read the writings of the prophets and apostles. This being done, the president makes an oration to the assembly, to exhort them to imitate, and do the things they heard. Then we all join in prayer, and after that we celebrate the Supper. Then they that are able and willing give what they think fit; and what is thus collected is laid up in the hands of the president, who distributes it to orphans and widows, and other christians as their wants require."



Would to Heaven that all the congregations in these United States approximated as nearly to the ancient order of things, as did those in behalf of whom Justin Martyr addressed the Roman emperor, not more than fifty years after the death of John the apostle!

EDITOR.

#### Communication.

Bishop A. Campbell—

DEAR SIR,—In reading your "Christian Baptist" of October last, on "Christian Union, No. 3," my attention was particularly arrested and drawn to a few statements on the doctrine of the "Son of God." The author, after having given us the history of the dispute between Alexander and Arius, and the unhappy result of that dispute, proceeds to state one of the most uncharitable sentiments I ever saw or heard. This appears to me the more strange, as proceeding from the pen of one professing such liberal principles, and so ably advocating the doctrine of christian union. I am heartily sorry that this, and a few other remarks of the writer, ever found a place in your pages. The sentiments to which I allude are as follows:—

"It is impossible for those who entertain a reverential regard for the Great God, not to be struck with the presumption of sinful, ignorant, erring mortals, who would dare to investigate a subject of such awful import as the *modus* of the divine existence, and who would presume to go farther in the discovery of God, than he has revealed himself." Have not the presbyterians—have not the regular baptists—have not most of the different sects—have they not "dared to investigate the *modus* of the divine existence?" Have they not "presumed to go further into the discovery of God than he has revealed himself?" Most certainly it is acknowledged. For they assert in their creeds, that "God exists in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that the Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son." This is not merely an attempt to investigate, but to explain the *modus* of divine existence. This is certainly going further into "the discovery of God, than he has revealed himself." But for this must they all be considered as having no reverential regard for God? If they had, they would not dare—they would not presume to do it! Nay, more; they would be struck to see another dare or presume to do it. The attempt to investigate the *modus* of divine existence, and to go beyond revelation, I cordially disapprove; but feel unwilling to proscribe all who have dared it. Your writer tells us, that "in the western states a very unprofitable controversy has existed on this subject. If men could be content with the scripture statements of the nature and character of Christ, and could realize the fact that he was worshipped as God by inspired apostles and christians, for which they suffered death, and which was, indeed, the first cause of their persecution, it would end all controversy, and we should soon see a union of sentiment. Without the agreement that Christ is really an object of worship, and is of course divine, there can never be christian union between them."

And is this, sir, the end of all your labors to destroy authoritative creeds and confessions, and unite christians on the broad, unerring base of the bible? Must we adopt this writer's creed, an authoritative creed too? for, without it, "there can never be christian union?" Permit me, sir,

to take a view of this creed, and make a few strictures on it."

1. Men must be content with the scripture statements of the nature and character of Christ.
2. They must realize the fact that he was worshipped as God by inspired apostles and christians.
3. That the apostles and christians for worshipping Christ as God, suffered death.
4. That their worshipping him as God was the first cause of their persecution.
5. That believing these things would end all controversy, and produce union of sentiment.
6. That, without the agreement that Christ is really an object of worship, and is of course divine, there can never be christian union.

*Article 1.* Men must be content with the scriptural statements of the nature and character of Christ.

With this I agree; but your writer has, in the following articles, fixed the doctrine of his nature and character, as being God and divine; and this in the supreme sense; for, on the same page, he says, "the worship of Christ always supposes and includes his godhead, in which the eternal, original, and essential dignity of his person consists." He also informs us on the same page, that this divine person, this person of eternal, original, and essential dignity, called the *Logos*, was made flesh, or conceived in the Virgin Mary, and therefore called the Son of God, by which name he was never called, till born of Mary. Now, sir, who can subscribe this article? Unitarians of every class reject it. Trinitarians will never receive it, for they never will admit the soul revolting, the heart chilling idea of the God supreme being conceived and born of a woman. Can men, thinking men, with the bible in their hands, be content with your writer's statement of "the nature and character of Christ?" Impossible! "It is presuming to go further in the discovery of God than he has revealed himself."

*Art. 2.* They must realize the fact that he (Christ) was worshipped as God by inspired apostles and christians.

This, though stated as a fact, we think, needs proof; and until this can be brought from the bible, we humbly deny it as a fact. We admit that he was worshipped by inspired apostles and christians, not as the only true God, but as the Son of the only true and living God.—Him, who was obedient to the death of the cross, has God highly exalted, and given a name above every name, that every knee should bow, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess him Lord, to the glory of God the Father. *Phil. ii. 6.* Here is an object of worship, and one, too, worshipped not only by inspired apostles and christians, but also by all in heaven. Can any one believe that this was the only true and living God? I think not. Again, in *Rev. i. 5. 6.* To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has made us kings and priests to God, and his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Here Christ is evidently an object of worship; and it is equally evident that this object is not the only true God. Again, *Rev. v. 9.* And they sang a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book and loose the seals thereof, for you were slain and have redeemed us to God by your blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation; and have made us to our God kings and priests. *v. 12.* Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. *v. 12.* Blessing, glory,

honor, and power, be to him that sits on the throne and to the Lamb, forever and ever. This worship is given by all in heaven, earth, and sea. None can doubt that the Son of God is the object as well as his Father. Were it necessary, I could produce abundantly more evidence to the same effect; but these are conclusive that Christ was worshipped, not as the only true God, but as his Son. We cannot subscribe this article.

*Art. 3.* That the apostles and christians, for worshipping Christ as God, suffered death. This article is positively denied, and we believe the writer cannot produce any evidence to establish the affirmation.

*Art. 4.* That their worshipping him as God, was the first cause of their persecutions.

This we as positively deny. Proof is again called for. We believe it is called for in vain, for it can never be produced.

*Art. 5.* That believing these things would end all controversy, and produce union of sentiment.

This we presume not fully to deny; for if all men could believe these things, there would be thus far a union of sentiment, and on these points controversy would cease of course. But are not Calvinists and Arminians generally agreed on the main points in the articles above? and is there an end of controversy between them? Is there a union of sentiment?

*Art. 6.* That without the agreement that Christ is really an object of worship, and is of course divine, there can never be christian union between them.

That Christ is really an object of worship, and that he is divine, none of us deny. We could readily subscribe this article; but as the writer has defined them, we dare not do it. Uniformity of sentiment is yet contended for, and without it, no christian union.

If these be your sentiments, you will need a new confession of faith, by which to receive members into your societies and communion. If this be your object, to exclude all other creeds to make way for one of your own make, I have been deceived in you. But I think you do not agree with the sentiments of your writer. I had thought, and yet think, that your object was to admit the bible only as authoritative—the only rule of faith and practice—and that the only terms of admission into the church was to believe with all the heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and a holy, obedient conformity to his word through life.

It is the desire of a number of your patrons that you publish this short tract in your next number. Respectfully, your friend,

AQUILA.

THERE appears, at first sight, a much greater discrepancy between "Christian Union" and "Aquila" than there really is. In the first instance, they both disapprove any attempt "to investigate the *modus* of the divine existence, or that would go farther in the discovery of God than he has revealed himself." And both agree that Presbyterians, Baptists, Calvinists, and Arians have made such attempts. And, indeed, every one of those metaphysical doctors, who have written most largely on this controversy, was wont to accuse his opponent with "too much presumption," and the want of "a reverential regard for the Great God." I think, too, that both "Aquila" and "Christian Union" are unwilling to proscribe all who have dared it.

There is too, in the quotation which "Aquila" has made from page 120, a much greater agree-

ment than his strictures upon it would seem to import. But one unscriptural phrase is the cause of all this controversy. Had "Christian Union" not introduced the Andover school divinity into his essay, nor this phraseology into his style—had he contented himself with the words which the Holy Spirit teaches in speaking of the Lord whom all christians worship and adore as God's only begotten Son—I say, had he been as fortunate in avoiding the language of Ashdod in this instance as he has been on other occasions, he would not have been so obnoxious to the criticisms of "Aquila." And while these two christians contend that men should be content with the scriptural statements of the nature and character of Christ, they should themselves watch their pens, lest they should offend against their own principles; for we all know that it is much easier to lay down good rules than it is to walk up to them; and I think I can find in both their essays, what I dare say they may both find in my remarks, departures from the style which we all commend. I do not enter into the merits of either of those pieces; they are both before the public; and from my knowledge of both the writers, I am pretty confident their views are very similar on the topics of this letter. But appearing in the regimentals and with the dialect of foreigners, they are likely to mistake one another. That the first christians were persecuted for worshipping Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as Lord of all, and that none can be called or esteemed christians, or unite in christian worship, who do not so believe in him, and so worship him, is what I am convinced both these writers believe. I heard of a man who undesignedly killed his own brother in an engagement with the enemies of his country, in consequence of his brother having put on a red coat.

EDITOR.

#### Messrs. Duncan and M'Lean.

AFTER almost all the political papers in the western country had noticed the withdrawal of these gentlemen from the Presbyterian sect, the editor of the Pittsburg Recorder, the "only religious paper in nine states and three territories," announced the fact; and, by way of comment, added the following very sensible anathema:—"It is said these ministers disown and oppose the Confession of Faith and Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and are acting on a disorganizing plan, tending to anarchy, and to open a way for the corruption of the church by the ingress of the most pernicious errors."

Faithful sentinel! True to yourself and to your cause! But tell me how comes it to pass, that when any one affirms that there is but one infallible rule of faith and practice, and that there is no use in adding to it a fallible one, that, in so doing, he becomes a heretic, a disorganizer, an anarchist, a demon? And how is it, tell me, sage, divine, and sagacious watchman! that when any one affirms that we ought to have a fallible and imperfect rule of faith and practice, he then becomes orthodox—sound—a friend of order and good rule—a saint? Does every one who says the scriptures are of divine authority, a revelation of God, and, like their author, perfect and complete—does every such one open the way for the corruption of the church, and introduction of "the most pernicious errors?" But if your fallible rules are your wall of fire, your bulwark, and strong tower, why did they not keep such monsters as Messrs. Duncan and M'Lean from invading your dominions and



drawing away so many disciples after them; men who are so wicked as to say that the bible is from Heaven, and your confession from—Edinburgh; men who are so impious as to affirm, even within your sacred walls, and before your awful tribunal, that it is worse than farcical trifling to add to a perfect and infallible rule, an imperfect and fallible one; men who are so obdurate as to say that your creeds began in error, were consummated by ignorance and superstition, and terminated in discord, division, hypocrisy, and persecution. Tell me these things, or rather tell the world, that they may see how wise, and good, and just you are, in consigning to infamy and perdition those unfortunate malefactors who had resolution to think correctly, and honesty and firmness to avow their convictions. When you have done these things, be assured we will join you in holding up to public scorn and contumely the above named gentlemen and all who espouse their sentiments. Till then you will have to pardon us for viewing your efforts as exactly in the spirit, and up to the model, of the Romanists against the Protestants, or of the Jewish Sanhedrim against the first promulgers of the Christian faith.

EDITOR.

No. 7.] FEBRUARY 6, 1826.

*Bigotry and Partiality.*

THIS is a time of religious and political earthquakes. The religious communities of the new world, and the political states of the old world are in circumstances essentially the same. A great political earthquake threatens to bury in its ruins tyrants and their systems of oppression. The ecclesiastical systems of the clergy appear destined to a similar fate. It is to be hoped that, as the New World took the lead in, and first experienced the blessings of, a political regeneration; so they will be foremost in the work, and first in participating the fruits of an ecclesiastical renovation.

All sects, new and old, seem like a reed shaken by the wind. Even the authority and infallibility of his Roman Holiness has been questioned by his own children in the New World. And who that has eyes to see, does not know that nothing but the sovereign charms of a monarch's smiles, and the strong chains forged from eight hundred millions of dollars in real estate,\* keep up the forms of Pope Eliza in the church of Saint Harry. The Solemn League and Covenant too, with the awful dogmas of the long parliament divinity; the test-oaths, and the sacred subscriptions to the saving canons of the kings of Saint Andrew, have failed to preserve, hale and uncorrupted, the pale of Presbyterian communion. The veteran chiefs, and the sanctified magi of the cause of uniformity, fear a volcanic eruption, alike ominous to themselves and their systems. Their "Religious Almanacs" portend comets, falling stars, and strange signs in the heavens, accompanied with eclipses of the greater and lesser lights that rule the night. Their constitution is motheaten, and the tinsel upon their frame of discipline has become dim.

And not less strange, the Reformation of John Wesley is already in need of reform. His people had scarce tested his system of government by the light, not of the bible, but of our political

\* "Wealth of the Church of England.—It is stated in a late paper, that the fee simple of the established Church of England, is in value equal to £200,000,000, or \$888,888,888; which, allowing sixteen dollars to a pound, would make 24,801 tons of silver. With the income of such a fund, no wonder the church is powerful and has its votaries, and can keep up its existence without possessing any true religion."—*Reformer*.

institutions, until they found it would eventuate in diocesan episcopacy, as tyrannical and as cruel as that which exiled Whitefield and the two Wesleys from the cloisters of "Christ's College" for reading the scriptures and praying.

The motto of the spirit of this age seems to be taken from the gigantic Young—

"Flaws in the best—full many flaws all o'er."

The Methodists, in the greatness of their strength, are rising to break the chains which threaten to bind them in the house of the Philistines. A host of reformers are about to reform this reformed system. We have seen their efforts, and rejoice. Though we are assured that when they shall have completed their projected reformation, they will then need a reform more thorough than yet they have attempted. We do not despise "their day of small things."

The following sensible remarks do honor to a work entitled "The Mutual Rights of Ministers and People," published in Baltimore by a reforming Methodist committee. We have only to add, that we have lamented that none seem to regret the evils of bigotry, partiality, and persecution, until they feel their dire effects; and that sometimes those who have once plead against persecution when themselves were the objects, plead for it when they had the sword by their side. But we give place to the following pertinent remarks. They are extracted from No. xiv. p. 28—31.

Ed. C. B.

"SERIOUS reflection may convince us all, that reformation is highly necessary, not only in matters of church government, but even in our general views of experimental and practical religion. Let us instance one or two particulars.

"While the ministers of religion have been crying aloud, and very justly, against pride, and covetousness, and sensuality, and many other evils: how is it that the great evil of bigotry has been nourished in the heart of the Christian church, as though it were an innocent or an indifferent thing? By bigotry, is meant, a man's obstinate attachment to an opinion, or set of opinions, which indisposes him to give a candid hearing to any thing else, and makes him unwilling that his brother should have the same liberty of judgment which he claims for himself. This is one of the deepest and most violent roots of moral evil. It is a great, and seemingly insurmountable obstruction to the progress of truth and righteousness over the whole earth. It affords nourishment and defence for Infidelity, Mahometanism, Judaism, and for every other erroneous system under the sun. Its practical fruits also are abundant. It may be doubted whether covetousness, or sensuality, or the love of power, or the love of praise, have produced a more plentiful harvest of internal and external ungodliness, than this bitter enemy of all righteousness, which Zion's watchmen appear almost to have overlooked. For let it be considered that this same bigotry is the parent of almost all the evil surmisings, heart-burnings, rash judgments, hard speeches, oppressions, and persecutions, that can be found in the Christian world. It not only makes null and void the arguments of an opponent; but, alas! it boldly impeaches his motives, and assails his moral character. Not only are his talents to go for nothing—not only are his labors to be despised; but his virtue and piety—his zeal and heavenly-mindedness, though supported by an unblamable life—all, all must be disposed of with indifference or contempt, by the high, and bitter, and sovereign dictates of bigotry! And yet this dark and dread-

ful evil is not only winked at, but nourished in the hearts of all the churches in christendom! Would to Heaven this were a mistake! but, alas! the evidence is too manifest, that every church upon earth greatly needs a reformation in this particular. Infidels, and Mahometans, and Heathens, and sinners of every description, may look on with astonishment, and see christians of every name, through the influence of this evil principle, animated with a more constant and flaming zeal against each other, than against the spirit of hell and all the works of darkness! And yet many seem not to be aware that it is to be regarded as a moral evil. Some, perhaps, may be found making high professions of justification and sanctification, and at the same time habitually nourishing this root of bitterness in their hearts. This is a mystery of mysteries, and can only be accounted for by supposing that a thick cloud of intellectual darkness has been overspreading the christian world, especially upon this subject. For a candid and faithful examination of the matter must surely convince every intelligent mind that it is as perfectly vain for a confirmed bigot to make professions of holiness, as for a confirmed thief to make a profession of honesty.

"Whether partiality must be regarded as the daughter, or as the sister of bigotry, may perhaps bear a dispute; but as they have the striking and identical likeness of twins, we may safely call them sisters. The just definition of partiality, is, the confined affection and confidence which a man has for his own party, and which produces a corresponding disaffection and distrust towards all others. How lovely, in the estimation of such a man, are all the peculiarities comprehended under the particular *ism*, by which he and his party are distinguished! and how dark and doubtful is all beside! While his mind is amusing itself in surveying the vast beauties of his party, and inimitable excellencies of its plan, the cloud which obscures the horizon of every other, appears to grow darker every hour! His feelings are sublime and inexpressible, and perhaps advance almost to that state of devotion which is due alone to the Deity, whose only plan is unexceptionable, and who has no party under the sun. Now as God has no party, and as his ministers are to do nothing by partiality, and as the wisdom which is from above is without partiality, as well as without hypocrisy, we might as well doubt whether hypocrisy be a moral evil, as to doubt whether partiality be such. And yet, alas! how has this great evil been spared in the christian world! And not only spared, but the presumption is, that both it and bigotry have been protected and encouraged as the great champions and defenders of each sectarian cause. They make a man zealous and decided—they make him resolute and courageous! Yes, and let it be added, they make him uncandid, fierce, dogmatical, and blind. They are as fine and acceptable allies for a Jew or a Turk—for a Pagan or an Atheist—as they are for a sectarian christian.

"Let us survey, a little further, these evil dispositions in human nature, that we may judge of them by their fruits.

"First, consider their effects within any religious denomination. They say to the soul of every member, So far shall you go in your meditations, and no farther: your business is not to inquire what is true, but merely to inquire what are the sentiments of our church, that you may defend them to the end of the world. You are not only to avoid contradicting them, but you are

to make no addition to them; because our lovely plan is not only free from errors, but also contains the whole body of truth completely. You must silence every heretical thought of improvement, and merely walk in the good old way, as we have pointed it out to you. Thus, whatever error may be in the church, it seems it must be held fast to eternity. The intellectual faculties of the members must be hampered, and their hearts corrupted, by doing violence to honest conviction, and by warping both reason and revelation into the pale of their sectarian boundaries. And even the truth itself is hindered by these evils from producing its native and salutary effects: for truth, when believed merely with the faith of bigotry, is little better than error. Its evidence is not examined, and its value, as truth, is not apprehended; but merely its subserviency to the support of our beloved cause. For if we made our cause subservient to the truth, instead of making the truth subservient to it, we should be willing for our churches to follow the truth wheresoever it might lead the way.

"Secondly, consider their effects upon the different denominations, in their relation to each other. We stand with surprize and wonder, to behold the errors and absurdities of other denominations: they stand with equal surprize and wonder, to behold the errors and absurdities of ours: while the true cause of wonder is, that each party cannot see that they are all holding fast the same identical error, namely, the infallibility of our own party. One party enjoins on all its members to defend every thing here, and to oppose every thing there: the other party does the same. Thus the inquiry, What is truth? is neglected and laid aside. One says, There is no religion with you; and another, There is no religion with you. One says, That is a damnable heresy; and the other says, That is a damnable heresy. One wonders at the blindness and obstinacy of this people; the other wonders at the blindness and obstinacy of that people; while all Heaven pities the selfish vanity of man, and all Hell is pleased with our destructive and ridiculous conduct."

#### Bigotry.

AMONGST the indiscriminate usage and application of the term *bigotry*, it is not uncommon to find it very unwarrantably applied. It is used to excite public odium, where the thing which it is used to represent is no way disgusting. Hence some are called bigots, and accused of bigotry, for rejecting all written creeds except the bible; for being strict in worshipping God according to his commandments; for requiring the members of a christian community to obey God rather than men. And I have known infidels accuse a christian church of bigotry, because they would not retain in their fellowship immoral persons, or persons who denied the Lord that bought them; and those who, in the apostle's estimation, denied the faith and were worse than an infidel. Those who dislike the institutions of the Messiah are often found reproaching those with bigotry who love and obey them. Indeed, there is no term, whether received in a good or a bad sense, that may not be most egregiously misapplied. EDITOR.

#### The Casting Vote, or the Creed triumphant over the Bible.

In the Long Run Association, Kentucky, reporting three thousand and sixty four members, at the last annual meeting, the first Friday in September last, in Bullitt county, a circular letter,



written by P. S. Fall, Bishop of the church in Louisville, in said state, advocating the scriptures as the one only sufficient, perfect, and infallible rule of christian faith and manners, and was rejected by the casting vote of Elder George Waller, Moderator of said meeting. It is not a little remarkable that the moderator, a descendant of the Wallers of Virginia, once persecuted by the friends of an orthodox creed, should have saved this little relic of Papal Rome from the sepulchre of human traditions, just in the same manner as his prototype, Dr. Lightfoot saved infant sprinkling in the Westminster Assembly. The house was equally divided on both occasions, and the moderators in the same manner, and for the same reasons, saved their favorite relics. A handsome way, indeed, of establishing orthodoxy! Might not only makes wrong *right*, but changes error into *truth*. The minority had the proscribed letter published; and we are happy in being able to lay before our readers a few sketches of it. We are sorry that our limits forbid more lengthy extracts.

"It is not unfrequently said, by word of mouth, as well as in creeds, that 'the word of God is the only, and the sufficient and perfect rule of faith and practice.' While this is admitted in word by all religious denominations, it is to be feared that but few feel the force, or understand the import of their own declaration. Let them but critically examine every part of this sentence, and while it appears in direct accordance with the word itself, it is in complete violation of the practice of almost all; for if the declaration be true, that the 'word of God' is the only, sufficient, and perfect rule in ALL things pertaining to belief or conduct, why are creeds, confessions and human formulas of doctrine, practice, government and experience, established as the exclusive tests of all, to the manifest deterioration of the bible, while churches rest contented with the bare declaration of its sufficiency?"

"In illustration of the importance of the Holy Bible, permit us to examine the position that the word of God is the only sufficient and perfect rule of our faith and practice."

"We observe, first: It is 'the rule of faith.' When we speak of 'faith,' we do not allude to a system of doctrine, in the common acceptation of the term, but to the very facts and truths which must be believed in order to salvation. It is supposed to be of very little importance whether a man be a Calvinist or Arminian; whether he adopt the Gillite, Fullerite, Hopkinsonian, or Triangular system of Calvinism; or whether he reject all, (these systems themselves being judges,) so that he believe 'the record God has given of his Son,' and move in obedience to the truth; so that his 'experience' coincides with the bible; all is then supposed to be right, whatever system he adopts. Now there is a manifest inconsistency between the two parts of this hypothesis; for all these systems propose themselves to us as true, yet they are all contrary, the one to the other; and if really thus at variance, and persons of equal intelligence and supposed piety be found among their advocates, how can all believe the record God has given of his Son, when all believe things so different? How can all move in obedience to the truth, when all move different ways? How can all have experiences coincident with the bible, when all have experiences coincident with the systems they maintain, thus at variance with each other? In fact, it is absurd to distinguish between a man's faith and what he believes, between a man's experience and what he

knows; for faith is belief—experience is knowledge."

"Thirdly. They are the only rule of both. As our faith and conduct are so intimately connected, that if the former be defective, the latter must be so of consequence—it is of vast importance to us that there be some definite standard by which to measure both, and ascertain their character. If there were more rules than one, and all agreed, all but one would be unnecessary; and if they disagreed, no one could ascertain which had the highest claim on our attention. We therefore should be left without any. There can, therefore, be but one only infallible standard of faith and practice; and this must be supported by evidence, internal and external, sufficient to prove its truth. It is not for us now to enter upon the consideration of the evidences of the inspiration of the Holy Bible; but there is one which demonstrates it to be that one only and infallible rule. It is the plainest book in the world. It is better adapted to all capacities than any other; and, as the Confession of Faith says, 'any one with ordinary sense can understand it.' When we read the Bible, we are often apt to look for some dark hidden meaning, which none but the preachers are supposed capable of understanding; (and hence the necessity of a special call and the communication of peculiar powers from on high;) but it is abundantly clear, that the meaning of every part of the New Testament is to be ascertained by an attentive study, not only of what is written, but why it was written, and that the literal and obvious meaning of words and phrases is the true meaning of those employed in the communication of divine truths."

"We observe, fourthly, that the word of God is the only sufficient rule of faith and practice."

"If we were to suppose that it were insufficient, should we not arraign the wisdom and benevolence of Heaven? If Jehovah could have given a sufficient rule of faith and practice, and would not do it, what ideas could we form of his benevolence? If his benevolence would have prompted him to give a sufficient rule, and he could not do it, he is of necessity deficient in wisdom; but he has given us the Holy Volume and has declared it to be sufficient—'able to make us wise to salvation,' to give us 'an inheritance among all them which are sanctified,' and 'to save our souls.' Jas. i. 21. Now every attempt to attach importance to any other rule than this, is evidently a blow aimed both at the wisdom and benevolence of God; since these have furnished us with the Holy Bible, and we lay it aside to examine ourselves, our brethren, and christian churches, by the works of men's hands—creeds and confessions of faith, and by these determine who is orthodox or the contrary. These things may not be palatable, brethren, but they are lamentably true, and require our most serious consideration."

"Lastly, the word of God is the only, sufficient, and perfect rule of faith and obedience."

"To suppose that God would communicate to his creatures any revelation that is imperfect, would shock all common sense. The denunciations against those who add to, or take from the Holy Volume, demonstrate that it needs neither increase nor diminution. All that God intends to reveal to the children of men, is to be found in the Bible. No new revelation need be expected, nor is one requisite, since all things necessary to know, to believe, and to do, in order to salvation, are given us already."

We are happy to discover in the Minutes of said Association, the progress of principles which augur a growing regard for, and investigation of, the infallible rule of faith and practice, as the following items show:—

*Query from Elk Creek.*—Is it for the honor of the cause of Christ, that all ordained Baptist preachers be called Bishops? If not, who are to be so named?

"In reply to this query we state, that it was evidently the practice in the first churches to denominate the Pastor of one congregation a Bishop. It is also clear that the terms Elder, Shepherd, Teacher, and Overseer, all refer to the same persons. It is, therefore, according to the word of God, and for the honor of the cause of Christ, that the teacher of one congregation be called a Bishop.

"The following queries from the church at Louisville, were referred to the churches for their investigation, with the request that they will express their sentiments upon them in their next letters:—

"1. Is there any authority in the New Testament for religious bodies to make human creeds and confessions of faith the constitutions or directories of such bodies in matters of faith or practice?

"2. Is there any authority in the New Testament for Associations? If so, what is it? If not, why are they held?

"The following query from the church at Shelbyville, is also referred as above, viz.

"Are our Associations, as annually attended, of general utility?"

#### *Confessions of Faith—Confessions of Opinion.*

AFTER all that has been said on this subject, there is not a sect in this country, of which we have heard, that has a confession of faith, properly so called. They have books and pamphlets, which they call by this name, and by which they impose upon themselves and upon one another. If it be not too late, we would give them a true and proper name, a name which we are assured every man of good sense and of common education must approve, as well as agree to discard the common name as a misnomer, as incorrect, and as absurd. The proper name of those instruments is, doubtless, according to the English language, A Confession of Opinions, or, Confessions of Opinions. If there be any difference between faith and opinion, (and that there is, all languages and dictionaries declare,) then the name we have given them is perfectly *apropos*, and their common name perfectly incongruous.

All writers on faith, properly so called, define it to be, "the belief of testimony, either human or divine." And opinion is, "the notions, judgment, or view which the mind forms of any thing." For example, I believe the testimony which God has given to Jesus of Nazareth, or I believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. This is a well attested fact, in proof of which the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit have given, or agree in one testimony. Concerning this person, his mission, and character, various opinions may be formed. All things testified of him are articles or items of belief; and all views, judgments, or notions formed of the things testified, are matters of opinion. Now all the abstract views of God and man, of things present and future, with which these confessions are replete, are matters of opinion; and as the general character of these books should fix upon them their name, they should be styled Confessions of Opinions. To

speaking philosophically, I believe what is testified, I know what I have observed or experienced, and I am of opinion in all things speculative. It is true, in one sense, I may be said to know what I have believed, when my faith has been proved by observation and experience. But the terms faith, knowledge, and opinion, should never be confounded. I believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins, I know that the sun gives us light, and I am of opinion that all infants dying shall be saved.

A person's faith is always bounded by testimony; his knowledge by observation and experience, and his opinions commence where both these terminate, and may be boundless as God's creation or as human invention. Perfect freedom and liberty should be granted to all opinions. The faith of christians should be guarded and circumscribed by the revelation of God, and every man's knowledge admitted to be co-extensive with his observation and experience. In matters of this world those distinctions are realized and acted upon every day. A killed B. C believes it, D knows it, and E is of opinion that A killed B. C believes it to be true, because three credible persons have sworn that they saw him do it. D, one of the three witnesses, knows it to be true because he saw it done. And E, who neither heard the testimony nor saw the deed, but from some circumstances detailed to him, is of opinion that it is true. These distinctions are, we presume, evidently correct. A superficial reader may object that Thomas is said to have believed what he saw. But those who attend to all the circumstances will see that he believed the testimony which he had before heard, when certain evidences were presented to his eyes. In this sense the term may, by even correct speakers, be often used. But enough is said to suggest a train of reflections which must issue in the conviction that our confessions of faith are confessions of opinions, and as such ought to have nothing to do with the union, communion, and harmony of christians. "There is one faith," says the apostle; but no where in the volume is it said, There is one opinion. Every new religious establishment, founded upon one opinion, will come to ruin, as all the past have done, and as all the present are doing. But the gates of Hades shall not prevail against those who build on the one faith, which is beautifully and properly called "the Rock." EDITOR.

*Boone county, Missouri, Nov. 23, 1825.*

*To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.*

DEAR SIR—I TAKE my pen in hand to inform you that your influence is much injured in this country among the United Baptists, through a report that you belong to the Unitarians, and that you yourself are one. This report has been circulated by the Unitarians in this country.—Feeling tolerably well satisfied that you are not, I have labored considerably to prevent a belief of this kind. But not having seen any thing in your writings decisive on that topic, have not been able to keep the people from harboring a suspicion that you may be an Arian or Unitarian.

You will please do yourself the justice, and me the pleasure, of informing me of your standing; that is, what society you are in, and your belief of our glorious Redeemer.

I remain yours in gospel bonds,

T. T.

*Reply to "T. T."*

DEAR BROTHER—YOUR favor of the 23d November was duly received; but my numerous



and multiform engagements hitherto prevented my replying to it; and I now do it through a medium that may prevent the necessity of my having frequently to furnish such replies. Many heresies and errors are ascribed to me by those who are interested in keeping the people in ignorance and bondage. The only favor that I ask of the public, is, to accept my own statements and avowals of my sentiments, instead of the railings of my opponents, who, because of their own imbecility, or that of their cause, find it more easy to defame than to refute. And, of all calumniators, they do it with the most effect, and are consequently most obnoxious to reproof, who commend that they may defame; who say such a sentiment is true, and in this he is undoubtedly right; "*but*" (O! the tremendous BUT) "he is a Socinian or an Arian."

None of these pulpit defamers or fireside traducers dare, through the same medium through which I publish my sentiments, publish their slanders and defamations. But by their more private inuendoes and reproaches, and by whole phalanxes of omnipotent *buts*, like moles, work under ground, and bury themselves and their followers in the heaps they raise.

In different regions in this vast country they use different slanders. Their general rule appears to be this: Whatever seems to be the most odious heresy in the neighborhood is placed to my credit. Thus, in one place, I am a Socinian; in another, an Arian; in a third, a Trinitarian; in some places I am all at once an Arminian; in others, a Calvinist; here a Pelagian, and there an Antinomian; yonder I am a Universalist, and elsewhere a Sabellian. If these calumnies were drawn from what I have spoken or written, I would at once compliment myself as a very close follower of Paul. For as each of these sectaries contends that Paul favors his heresy, if any one teaches *all* Paul taught, he will be as likely to be represented as favoring these heresies as Paul himself is. Thus with the Methodist, Paul is a Methodist; with the Calvinist, he is a Calvinist; with the Universalist, he is a Universalist; and with the Socinian, Paul is said to have been a Socinian, &c. &c. But if none but Calvinists approved my course, or if none but Arminians censured me, I would conclude that I had disowned Paul. For to me it is certain, if any man teach *all* that Paul taught he will sometimes be approved by all, and sometimes blamed by all. There is no sect that does not contend for some things Paul taught. It is, therefore, most apparent, that he who is approved by one sect only, is, *ipso facto*, proved to be a setter forth of some new doctrine, or a retailer of some antiquated error.

But the misfortune is, that I cannot enjoy the above compliment in full, because I know that the rule of slander most generally approved, is, to accuse me of holding that error or heresy which is most damnable in the estimation of those amongst whom it is circulated. And when this will not serve the purpose, even my moral character is assailed. In Kentucky, some time after my debate with Mr. McCalla, it was reported that I had stolen a horse; and not long since, in Illinois, it was said that I was excommunicated for drunkenness. Not far from Lake Erie I was said to have turned Deist, and by those too who bought their sermons in Boston, and read them in Ohio; and in many places, that I was known to be an "*extremely immoral man*" in my own vicinity. In fact, as a Doctor of Divinity told his people near Lexington, I am "*a very bad man*" in the estimation of many,

2C

and it would afford them a satisfaction, which I trust they will never enjoy, (and yet it is *cruel* on my part to deprive them of it) to be able to publish my fall and ruin to the utmost bounds of this union. I am sure of it. They would rejoice to be able, with some degree of plausibility, to accuse me of some high misdemeanor. For their own deeds and lisplings avow it.

That I am not a Socinian, you may see by turning over to No. 3, 1st vol. C. B.—and as you know I have no faith in the *divine right* of Associations, yet, to shield me from such *far-off* and *underhand* attacks, as well as for other important purposes, that I may be under the inspection and subject to merited reprehension, I and the church with which I am connected are in "full communion" with the Mahoning Baptist Association, Ohio; and, through them, with the whole Baptist society in the United States; and I do intend to continue in connexion with this people so long as they will permit me to say what I believe, to teach what I am assured of, and to censure what is amiss in their views or practices. I have no idea of adding to the catalogue of new sects. This game has been played too long. I labor to see sectarianism abolished, and all christians of every name united upon the one foundation on which the apostolic church was founded. To bring Baptists and Paidobaptists to this is my supreme end. But to connect myself with any people who would require me to sacrifice one item of revealed truth, to subscribe any creed of human device, or to restrain me from publishing my sentiments as discretion and conscience direct, is now, and I hope ever shall be, the farthest from my desires, and the most incompatible with my views. And I hope I will not be accused of sectarian partiality when I avow my conviction that the Baptist society have as much liberality in their views, as much of the ancient simplicity of the christian religion, as much of the spirit of christianity amongst them, as are to be found amongst any other people. To say nothing of the things in which they excel, this may be said of them without prejudice to any. And that they have always been as eminent friends of civil and religious liberty as any sect in christendom, will not, I presume, be denied by any. But that there are amongst them some mighty Regulars, who are as intolerant as the great Pontiff of regularity and good order, no person will deny. And that there is in the views and practices of this large and widely-extended community, a great need of reformation, and of a restoration of the ancient order of things, few will contradict. In one thing, perhaps, they may appear in time to come, proudly singular, and pre-eminently distinguished. Mark it well. Their historian, in the year 1903, may say, "We are the only people who would tolerate, or who ever did tolerate, any person to continue as a Reformer or a Restorer amongst us. While other sects excluded all who would have enlarged their views and exalted their virtues; while every Jerusalem in christendom stoned its own prophets, and exiled its own best friends, and compelled them to set up for themselves, we constitute the only exception of this kind in the annals of christianity—nay, in the annals of the world." I think it is not a very precarious *perhaps*, that this may yet be said of this ancient and singular people.—But should it come to pass that neither they nor any other people can say this of themselves, then, most assuredly, if ever there be a united and a happy state of the church upon this earth; if ever there be a millennium; the Baptist society,

47

as well as every other, will have to be immersed in that general catastrophe which awaits every sect who holds a principle incompatible with this millennial state of the church.

Your brother, in the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

EDITOR.

January 17, 1826.

P. S. There was a John Campbell in Pittsburgh, who was said to have been a Socinian. He is no longer one. He has gone to *Hades*, where there is not a Socinian, an Arian, nor a Trinitarian. Perhaps I may, in Missouri, have been identified with, or mistaken for this person. I need not cause you to pay the postage for the minutes of our Association, or any other documents, as I presume the above will be satisfactory.

#### Conscience.—No. II.

In a former number we set out with this position, viz.—“Throughout christendom every man’s religious experience corresponds with his religious education.” This was partially illustrated in that number. We will make some additions in the present.

As there are some things similar and some things different in the education of most persons; so there are some things alike and some things unlike in their religious experience. In our last number on this subject we took notice of the influence which conscience has upon the religious experience of all; and that conscience was framed by those who first had access to the infant mind. This was proved by observing the varieties which appear in the consciences of different individuals.

What is called “the work of conversion,” is, in many instances, but the revival of early impressions. And what a poor progress the teachers of religion, as they are called, would make in converting persons, were it not for the early impressions made by parents and guardians, may be easily ascertained by comparing their success amongst Pagans and amongst the descendants of christian parents. And even amongst the latter, their success is proportioned to the degrees of care bestowed upon some, in comparison of others.

Amongst the numerous accounts of “christian experience” which we have heard from the lips of the converted, and the histories of their conversion, we do not remember to have heard one which was not to be traced to, or resolved into, parental influence, or its equivalent. This appears to be the *preaching* which is most commonly instrumental in bringing sinners into the fold of God. I have sometimes thought that not one preacher in these United States has had the honor of being the entire and exclusive means of converting one of the descendants of those who made any pretensions to christianity, except in the case of his own family. Their hearers and attendants, in public assemblies, have heard that there is a God, a heaven, a hell, a Saviour, before they hear it from their lips. They predicate their pleas, arguments, exhortations, and addresses to their hearers, upon the hypothesis, that they are in possession of these first principles. When any one is moved to *fear* or *hope* from their addresses, it is from comparing what he has heard, or from associating it with his former conduct and convictions.

This person was awakened on hearing a preacher read for his text these words, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.”—On hearing these words he was struck with fear; his whole soul was harrowed up; he was almost

driven to despair: but in the conclusion he was made to hope in God and to trust in his salvation. Ask him what he feared and why he feared, and he will tell you that he feared the wrath of Heaven for having neglected this salvation. But had he not previously believed that there was a future punishment awaiting the disobedient, how could his fears have been excited? “Put,” adds he, “I was not only afraid of the wrath of Heaven on account of my neglect, but I would rather than all the world that I could have believed in the Saviour and shared in his salvation.” Well, why did you desire to believe in the Saviour if you had not previously believed there was a Saviour? Why did you wish to share in his salvation, if you had not before believed that you were a sinner, and that there was salvation? Your doubts and fears, then, were all founded upon your former convictions. And had it not been for these, neither the reading of these words, nor the preacher’s remarks, would have produced one emotion. Nay, his strongest appeals to your conscience were based upon the supposition that you were in possession of these convictions. If he have been instrumental in any respect, it was in causing you to hope that notwithstanding you had long sinned against the light you had since an infant, there was room in the divine mercy for your pardon and acceptance, in believing and obeying the truths you had once received and acknowledged, and had been taught, whether your father was Protestant or Papist, High Churchman or Dissenter. He may have revived those impressions, and been instrumental in leading you to repentance for having lived in opposition to your own acknowledgments; but the seeds were sown before.

In the same manner the influences of Heaven take hold of these truths, however first communicated to the mind; and persons are not unfrequently, without a preacher, influenced to act according to the light formerly received, and then illustrated and revived—’tis true, not without a preacher, in the scripture sense, but in the popular sense. For parents, guardians, or whoever pronounces the words of the preachers specially called and sent by God, only gives extension or sound to words long since announced.

But the seeds are sown in “a land of bibles,” always in infancy or childhood, which, under the divine blessing, in riper years, bring forth fruit to everlasting life. Conscience is then formed, and without this, a man might as rationally expect to be instrumental in converting fish as men. But it most commonly happens that *tares* are sown with the *wheat* in the mind, though not in the sense of the parable; or, in other words, improper views are communicated with the truth of God, which, in after life, give rise to that mental perturbation and those varied feelings of which many are conscious. The catechisms and little manuals, put into the hands of children, together with the old wives’ fables which they are wont to hear, lay the foundation for many a doubt and reverie, of which, otherwise, they never would have known any thing.

Every person who will reflect, and who can reflect upon the workings of his own mind, will readily perceive how much trouble he has experienced from mistakes. Nay, much of his present comfort is derived from the correction of former mistakes and misapprehensions.—Who that has read John Bunyan’s conversion, John Newton’s, or Halyburton’s, or any of those celebrated standards of *true* conversion, has not observed that glaring mistakes and erroneous views were amongst the chief causes of their



long and gloomy trials; and that their after peace, and joy, and hope, arose from the correction of mistakes which the errors of education had thrown in their way.

For example: The numerous speculations on the different kinds of faith has pierced with many sorrows innumerable hearts. In all the varied exhibitions of christianity, much stress is laid on faith. And as soon as it is affirmed that he that believes shall be saved, and that care should be taken that faith be of "the right kind," the attention of the thoughtful is turned from the truth to be believed to "the nature of faith." The fears and agonies which are experienced are not unfrequently about "believing right." The great concern is about true faith. This person is looking in himself for what he has been taught are the true signs of regeneration, or of the faith of regeneration. He is distressed to know whether his faith is the fruit of regeneration, or whether it is mere "historic faith." Unable to find such evidences as he is in quest of, he is distracted, he despairs, he agonizes. He tells his case. He is comforted by being told that these are "the pangs of the new birth." He draws some comfort from this consideration, which increases or decreases as these pangs are supposed to be genuine or the reverse. Thus he is tossed to and fro in awful uncertainties, which are more or less acute according to his moral sensibilities. By and by he hopes he is regenerate, and a calm ensues, and he is joyous because he fancies he has been regenerated. Thus his comforts spring not from the gospel, but from his own opinion of himself.

Another, under the same system, receives no comfort because he has not found the infallible signs in himself of being a true believer. He despairs—he is tormented. He concludes that he is one of the reprobates. He is about to kill himself. What about? Not because there is no Saviour, no forgiveness, no mercy. Not because the gospel is not true; but because it is true, and because he cannot find in himself the true signs of genuine conversion. Thousands have been ruined—have been shipwrecked here. This the bible never taught. This case never occurred under the apostles' teaching. It is the genuine offspring of the theological schools. It is the experience of a bad education. A few drops of acid sour a punchon of the sweetest wine. And thus a few wrong notions convert the love of the Saviour into divine wrath—make the gospel of non-effect—embitter life—and make it better not to have been born.

I well remember what pains and conflicts I endured under a fearful apprehension that my convictions and my sorrows for sin were not deep enough. I even envied Newton of his long agony. I envied Bunyan of his despair. I could have wished, and did wish, that the Spirit of God would bring me down to the very verge of suffering the pains of the damned, that I might be raised to share the joys of the genuine converts. I feared that I had not sufficiently found the depravity of my heart, and had not yet proved that I was utterly without strength. Sometimes I thought that I felt as sensibly, as the ground under my feet, that I had gone just as far as human nature could go without supernatural aid, and that one step more would place me safe among the regenerated of the Lord; and yet Heaven refused its aid. This, too, I concealed from all the living. I found no comfort in all the declarations of the gospel, because I wanted one thing to enable me to appropriate them to myself. Lacking this, I could only envy the happy

favorites of heaven who enjoyed it, and all my refuge was in a faint hope that I one day might receive that aid which would place my feet upon the rock.

Here this system ends, and enthusiasm begins. The first christians derived their joys from an assurance that the gospel was true. Metaphysical christians derive theirs not from the truth of the gospel, but because they have been regenerated, or discover something in themselves that entitles them to thank God that they are not as the publican. The ancients cheered themselves and one another by conversing on the certainty of the good things reported by the apostles—the moderns, by telling one another what "the Lord has done for their souls in particular." Their agonies were the opposition made by the world, the flesh, and the devil, to their obeying the truth. Our agonies are a deep and solemn concern for our own conversion. Their doubts were first, whether the gospel were true, and, after they were assured of this, whether they might persevere through all trials in obeying the truth. Ours, whether our conversion is genuine. More evidence of the truth removed their first doubts, and the promises of the gospel, with the examples around them, overcame the last. A better opinion of ourselves removes ours. In a word, the philanthropy of God was the fountain of all their joys—an assurance that we are safe is the source of ours.

The experience of the Moravians differs from the experience of almost every other sect. They teach their children that God is love, and through his son loves all that obey him. This principle is instilled from the cradle. Their history does not furnish an instance of a work of conversion similar to those which fill the memoirs and magazines of all the different bodies of Calvinists. Perhaps enough has been said to prove our position, that "throughout christendom every man's religious experience corresponds with his religious education." If not, a volume of evidence can be adduced. EDITOR.

#### *Honorable Title of "D. D." Refused.*

In some eastern papers "the Rev. Spencer H. Cone, a Baptist clergyman," was reported as recently dubbed D. D. But this was a mistake. It was the Rev. Samuel H. Cox who was dubbed and refused the honor. We are sorry to observe a hankering after titles amongst some baptists, every way incompatible with their profession; and to see the remarks lately made in the "Columbian Star," censuring Mr. Cox for declining the honor. Those who deserve honorary titles are the least covetous of them. We have not met with any baptist bishop who is more worthy of a title of honor, if such these double D's be esteemed, than Robert B. Semple of Virginia; and when the degree was conferred on him, he, like a christian, declined it.

The following remarks are worthy of a place in this work:—

"In the New York Observer of the 26th ult. we find an article occupying nearly two closely printed columns, with the signature of Samuel H. Cox, Pastor of the Lightstreet Presbyterian Church, N. Y. in which the writer, after stating that he had seen a newspaper paragraph from which he learned that the trustees of Williams College, Mass. had taken with his name the very customary liberty of attaching D. D. to it, says, 'I ask the privilege of announcing that I will not accept of that appendage.' And after some other observations, he adds, 'It is high time—the spirit of the age demands it—that this mania

of graduating should itself be graduated, and that without favor in the enlightened estimation of the public. *Itaque illud Cassianum. Cui bono fuerit, in his personis valcat.* The *cui bono* question in reference to those academico-theological degrees, and for the best possible reason, has never been answered. It is an affair that belongs to another category. It has nothing to do with *good*, but only with—*honor!*"

Having disavowed any disrespect to Williams College, or to his clerical brethren, especially the order from which he repudiates himself, he makes the following remarks:

"The purely academic and literary or professional degrees, such as A. B. or A. M. or M. D. or L. L. D. and such as merely indicate office or station, and which colleges do not confer, as V. D. M. or S. T. P. are out of the argument, and "against such there is no law." If doctorates in divinity meant any thing, they would sometimes be libellous. There are those, it is too notorious, who need a great deal more than collegiate or colloquial doctoration to impart to them intellectual, or literary, or theological, or (I blush to write it) even moral respectability; and whose doctoration, while it is the acrimonious laugh of the million, becomes a solid reason, were there none better, to those who prize good company, for abdicating the eminence of being classed with them in the associations of the community. "To their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united."

In assigning reasons for refusing the honorary title of D. D., Mr. Cox makes the following remarks:

"I believe that the principle of ministerial party is both evangelical and important, and that the system in question is very inimical to it; that there is no higher earthly honor in the relations of life than that of a minister of Jesus Christ, who loves his master and understands the truth and magnifies his office; and consequently I dislike a system that so evidently and popularly implies something unintelligibly more, and arrays one ministerial brother in an adventitious superiority over his peers; and that it is anomalous for a secular and literary institution, without any faculty of theology, to come into the church universal of Jesus Christ, and diversify his officers, and confer permanent degrees of official honor, which neither deposition nor excommunication, should they succeed, has power to annul; and all this where he has said, "Be not you called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ; and all you are brethren." It is also a grand reason that I think it a "scarlet" relic of papacy, and that demands retrenchment; but the greatest reason is, that it is earthly, and at variance with the spirit, if not with the very letter of the gospel. The passage in Matt. xxiii. 5—12. appears incapable of a fair solution in coincidence with the innocency of doctoral honors in the church. Many other scriptural references might be made. Take a few more: *Matt.* xviii. 1—6. *v.* 19. *Luke* xxii. 24—27. *xx.* 45—47. *John* xvii. 18. *xii.* 25. 43. *v.* 41. *1 Cor.* 1—5. *Rev.* iii. 21. *xii.* 4. *xvi.* 15. *xvii.* 12. The Old Testament contains much to the same purport.

To conclude, I believe that the usefulness, the moral worth, the genuine respectability of the sacred profession, and, of course, the honor of our common Master, require the abjuration of Doctorates."

#### Unity of Opinion.

UNITY of opinion, abstractedly considered, is neither desirable nor a good; although considered

not in itself, but with reference to something else, it may be both. For men may be all agreed in error; and, in that case, unanimity is an evil. Truth lies within the Holy of Holies, in the temple of knowledge; but doubt in the vestibule that leads to it. Luther began by having his doubts as to the assumed infallibility of the Pope; and he finished by making himself the corner stone of the Reformation. Copernicus and Newton doubted the truth of the false systems of others before they established a true one of their own. Columbus differed in opinion with all the old world before he discovered a new one; and Galileo's terrestrial body was confined in a dungeon for having asserted the motion of those bodies that were celestial. In fact, we owe almost all our knowledge, not to those who have agreed, but to those who have differed, and those who have finished by making all others think with them, have usually been those who began by daring to think for themselves; as he that leads a crowd, must begin by separating himself some little distance from it. If the great Hervey, who discovered the circulation of the blood, had not differed from all the physicians of his own day, all the physicians of the present day would not have agreed with him. These reflections ought to teach us that every kind of persecution for opinion, is incompatible with sound philosophy. It is lamentable, indeed, to think how much misery has been incurred from the intemperate zeal and bigoted officiousness of those who would rather that mankind should not think at all, than not think as they do. Charles V. when he abdicated a throne, and retired to the monastery of St. Juste, amused himself with the mechanical arts, and particularly with that of a watch-maker; he one day exclaimed, "What an egregious fool must I have been, to have squandered so much blood and treasure in an absurd attempt to make all men think alike, when I cannot even make a few watches keep time together." We should remember also that assent or dissent is not an act of the will, but of the understanding. No man can will to believe that two and two make five, nor can I force upon myself the conviction that this ink is white, or this paper black.—[*National Gazette*.]

[This is all very good; but in the christian religion there are no new discoveries, no new improvements to be made. It is already revealed and long since developed in the apostolic writings. We may discover that there are many new errors and old traditions, which are alike condemned in those sacred writings. But truth is at least one day older than error; and what many now call "the good old way," was two or three hundred years ago denominated a wicked innovation or a chimerical new project. Old things become new when long lost sight of, and new things become old in one generation. But truth is eternal and unchangeable.]

Ed. C. B.

No. 8.] MARCH 6, 1826.

*Review of a Sermon on the Duty of the Church to prepare Pious Youth in her bosom for the Gospel Ministry.—By the Rev. Gideon Blackburn, D. D. Pastor of the Church in Louisville, Ky.—Text, Eph. iv. 11, 12.*

"And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

THIS is that Rev. Gideon Blackburn, D. D. who boasted that he had "swept from the arena"



a discourse of mine before the legislature of Kentucky, in 1824, on the subject of what he calls "the gospel ministry;" and whom I had invited to do in my presence what he had so easily done in my absence. This he has since declined and begs to be excused. But as a substitute he has offered this sermon on that subject, fraught with all the logic and rhetoric for which he has been honored with the title of D. D. We may then expect to find in it all those arguments which "swept from the arena" my cobwebs; which dissipated to the four winds of heaven the dust of my reasonings, arguments, and proofs. As a fair and full specimen of what the Doctor can advance in support of his views, we are bound to consider it. This is his cool, deliberate, studied, and, no doubt, best effort, against what some "wiseacres" have said against modern clergymen as the successors of the apostles, as the ambassadors of Christ, as the called and sent of the Holy Spirit. We shall therefore bestow a little attention upon it. For as the author of it is at the head of the priesthood of his state, and as he is one of the honored called ones, whom the Holy Spirit has sent to Kentucky; and, in attestation of which, and to show how far the men of this world have approved of the Holy Spirit's choice and work, they have honored him with two capitals of mighty power and awful import; and as he is a father in Israel, his sayings and reasonings are entitled to great respect. It is but seldom the patrons of the science of this world approve of the appointments of the Holy Spirit. For of the thousands whom he calls and sends, not more than one in ten is recognized by colleges and their trustees as worthy of an honorary title. When, therefore, the Holy Spirit, the presbytery, and the patrons of science, infidels and all, concur in attesting an ambassador of Christ, most assuredly we ought, with due submission, to sit at his feet. But this rebellious heart of mine wants something more than all the presbytery and the board of trustees can confer, in proof that Gideon Blackburn, D. D. Pastor of the church in Louisville, is sent by the Holy Spirit, and a true ambassador of Jesus Christ. It is true that this sermon exhibits him very much in the true character of an ambassador, for as soon as an ambassador has proved his mission, his mere assertions and *say so's* are equal to all the logic and rhetoric of Demosthenes and Cicero united in one head. Consequently the Doctor, laying infinite stress upon his own infallibility, has not adduced one single scrap from Moses to John, to prove the subject of his discourse. This is, indeed, ambassador-like. The Holy Spirit, the college, and the presbytery, having chosen, and called, and sent, and honored him, it would have been beneath the dignity of them all that he should have to prove what he says. This would be placing him upon a level with a Methodist or Baptist elder. This would destroy all his high pretensions. It is necessary for a Methodist or Baptist teacher to prove all that he advances, but entirely unnecessary for Gideon Blackburn, D. D. Right well he knows this! and consequently, in the true style of an ambassador, he deigns no proof!

His sermon is intended to proclaim that it is the duty of the church to prepare in her bosom pious youth for the gospel ministry. Now this is really a new message from the skies, for there is not one word, from Genesis to John, which says that it is the duty of the church to prepare pious youth for the gospel ministry. This point could not be proved from the words of any pre-

vious ambassador, and it is unnecessary for an ambassador to prove his own communications to be true. But now this reverend ambassador informs the world that it is the duty of the church to train young men for the gospel ministry, and of these young men to make presbyters or elders.

His text, to have been pertinent to his purpose, ought to have read, "When Jesus ascended to his throne, he gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, supernaturally qualified for the work, and in a moment prepared to discharge the duties of their calling—and then gave orders to the churches to train up young men, artificially and mechanically, to be their successors in the manner hereinafter specified." This text would have suited his subject. But I am wrong. An ambassador, prophet, or evangelist, &c. ought to take no text at all, but make a text for himself. The taking of a text implies inferiority and dependance, every way unbecoming "the legate of the skies." And the Rev. Doctor is aware of this; for although he conforms to the custom of his modern peers in writing a text at the head of the page, he simply adduces it as a motto, and troubles his head no more about it, but proceeds to something more sublime and glowing from the skies—no old revelation, but one new and brilliant, occupies his tongue and pen.

This sermon occupies twenty octavo pages, and has not one argument in it to show that the text has any more bearing upon the present day, nor upon his subject, than "Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob." Indeed there is not a single sentence of scripture adduced in the way of argumentative proof, in the whole discourse. Some two or three scraps round off as many periods, and the bible is upon a par with the Koran through the remainder of the sermon. But this was wisely done, for the bible has nothing to do with his object or design. His mock explanation of apostles, prophets, pastors, &c. is a burlesque on modern commentators. The "teachers" mentioned in the text are represented as professors of divinity and presidents of theological schools. "Some teachers," says he, "whose business it is particularly to explain the doctrines and regulations (canons) of the church, and carefully instruct young men in the course of theology taught in the bible."

His method of sweeping from the arena all argument and proof, is fairly exhibited in the following words:—"The general idea implied in the office of minister or ambassador for Christ, was designed to continue in the church to the end of time; but the special idea attached to the ministry, under the word apostles and prophets, ended with the completion of the canon of scripture." This single assertion of one D. D. "sweeps from the arena" all that ten thousand such as I am might say in a century. So the Doctor thinks, for he adduces no more. This is just the topic, too, in substance, on which all turns, and every thing is decided, that came upon that "arena" which the Doctor swept so clean. This is a besom of destruction, indeed! this mighty, this omnipotent assertion. 'Tis well for you that you are an old man, and of a privileged order; for had a pious young man asserted so roundly, we would have demanded the proof. But there is no need of proof—an ambassador from the skies says so!

But after all, the assertion is a little wanting in common sense, and borders upon what, amongst young men, is called nonsense.—A "general idea" continues in the church till the

end of time, and a "special idea" died with the completion of the inspired canon. This reminds me of a waggish epitaph written on the tomb of the materialist and sceptic historian, David Hume. A student in Edinburgh is said to have written it.

"Beneath this circular idea,  
Vulgarly called tomb,  
Impressions and ideas rest,  
Which constituted Hume."

So the general idea implied in ambassador and minister is immortal, and the special one is in the tomb of the apostles! I yet remember the rhetorical flourishes of this textuary when I last heard him, and this is a pretty good sample of them, excepting what pertains to his hands.

In describing this general idea which is found in the persons of modern ambassadors, he says, "He," to wit, the idea, "must have a correct knowledge of theology in its radical principles," [the branches, no matter about them,] "its systematic arrangement," [at Westminster,] "and the dependance of its parts," [the five points,] "upon each other, together with a good knowledge of the classes of texts on which each leading idea is bottomed." He has only to study the classes of texts on which the leading ideas of his system is bottomed. Thus the Doctor aims at making a good textuary.

But in farther describing this textuary, who on a sudden becomes a general idea, and assumes to be an ambassador with his good knowledge of general ideas, bottomed on classes of texts, he says, he "is employed by Christ to be his agent on earth in negotiating with the souls of men." What a general idea is this! A pious youth becomes a beneficiary, then a textuary, next a minister or ambassador—Christ's agent, negotiating with the souls of men!!! A fine picture! an important office! a high calling!

In finding a model for this plan of procedure, the Doctor ransacks the bible in vain; but he finds in some old copy, or, may be, in the apocrypha, a piece of church history I never saw before. Perhaps it is a new revelation. As it is of great consequence to the community, I shall therefore quote it. It is designed to tell us how the primitive church got a supply of the general ideas, called ambassadors:—"Some one who appeared to be best qualified to lead the devotions, was appointed to that office. He devoted himself to reading and study, that he might acquit himself properly in that station. After he had acquired sufficient theological knowledge and a good degree of boldness in the faith, he was set apart to the work of the ministry by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." This is a precious piece of ancient history, and we shall ever after quote it as of undoubted authority, because an agent of the Saviour's in negotiating with the souls of men in Kentucky, has favored us with it.

In dividing these agents into proper classes, and in assigning them their portion of labor, he wills some to be editors of religious newspapers, and authors, who are to be qualified "to defend the minute parts of the christian system." Some to be able "logically and mathematically to explore the whole field of theory, and to clear off the heterogeneous matter cast on the truth by the sophistry and wickedness of men of perverse minds." Some "for parochial duties." Some "for pioneers in the wilderness," and a host of "minute men on all the essential doctrines of the gospel." These are to be ready at a minute's warning to put on their armor of texts, and to march into the field panoplied with general ideas.

But the doctor aims at a new plan of augmenting the number of the presbyterian clergy, from 1080, the present number, to twenty thousand, in the lapse of twenty years. Theological schools will not answer the purpose—too slow in their operation. He laments that pious youths of respectable parents are deterred from becoming ambassadors. "Many parents even discourage their pious sons from preparing for an office so destitute of pecuniary returns." The poor, then, by means of gratuitous contributions, are to be converted into agents of Heaven; and he will have every fifty members to make one priest in five years. It will not do, he says, "to leave to parents to select and educate" their sons for ambassadors. This will produce no favorable results. "There are two thousand congregations of Presbyterians in the union. Let each of these educate one beneficiary in five years;" or "every fifty members by paying 25 cents per month, could furnish one agent to negotiate for Heaven, every five years." Thus, for the small sum of seven hundred and fifty dollars, one ambassador could be furnished with sufficient "general ideas," bottomed on "classes of texts," and might become a "minute man" in all the "essential doctrines of the gospel; and thus a supply of one for every five hundred souls could be easily obtained, if avarice were subdued." But he will have those young men put under some member of presbytery to study divinity, and thus recommends a departure from that fragment of ecclesiastical history which he made known to the world.

Unless efforts similar to these are made, "the period is not far remote when missionary efforts must be paralyzed—the very foundation of the church" [viz. Jesus Christ and the apostles,] "must give." As an argument to enforce the burden of his message, he reminds the people that he was the originator "of the plan of instruction now adopted amongst the American savages; the plan which was at the bottom of the present missions, and which now gives them support;" and hints, modestly enough, that some have not honored him for it, but "have attempted to conceal" this fact. If one plan of operation which he has introduced, and of which he is the inventor, has been so successful, it is a fair and necessary conclusion that this plan of augmenting the number of priests must be alike wise and practicable, and that similar results will follow its adoption. With such weapons as these, the Rev. Gideon Blackburn, D. D. "sweeps the arena" of all false doctrine, and carries conviction to the hearts of his hearers. EDITOR.

#### *A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things. No. XI.*

*To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.*

W—Co. Ind. Dec. 12, 1825.

DEAR SIR:—A SINCERE desire to know the truth as it is in Christ, is the sole cause of these lines. I need not tell you that I am not a scholar—that these lines will manifest. Neither do I approve of the popular doctrines of the clergy, or even of such an order of men; but think it my duty to let you know that I belong to a church called "German Baptists," sometimes "Dunkards," whose government is the New Testament only. They are not the same in principle or faith with those of the old connexion in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Ohio; but an order that took rise from them in Kentucky, by one Teacher, in Shelby county, about six years ago, amounting now to about two thousand, having



about twenty-four teachers, and increasing fast. Our views of christianity you have expressed in the *Christian Baptist*, vol. 2d, and on the grace of God, volume second, Nos. 8 and 9; and in the whole second volume I do not see any thing to divide us in sentiment, though I do not approve of some things in your first and third volumes. The Calvinists here generally anathematize the Christian Baptist because it condemns their metaphysical speculations. I read your debate with McCalla, and also the first and second part of the 3d vol. of the *Christian Baptist*, and find myself edified, my views enlarged, and my faith strengthened; yet I was astonished, finding you so great an advocate for primitive christianity, to hear you say that whatsoever the apostles commanded constituted the practice of the first christians, and yet not notice the plain commandment of washing feet, and that of the kiss of charity; and to hear you say that the practice of the apostles constituted a law for us, and upon this ground contended for weekly communion, and yet not stating that the night was the time, yea, the only time, according to Christ's institution and the practice of the apostles to observe this ordinance. Though I am not convinced of the necessity of weekly communion, not seeing how it could be kept so often in our back country, owing to our scattered state of living from ten to fifteen miles apart; yet I think that whenever it is observed, it should be done according to the primitive model. This much I have written for your own meditation, and now request you to write to me personally, and give me your views on *trine* immersion. You have plainly proved in your Debate that immersion was the only baptism the New Testament authorizes; but you have not stated whether *trine* or single immersion is the proper action of baptism. In your Debate you state that *trine* immersion was practised within two years of the lives of the apostles, and we know, according to Robinson's History, that it was the practice of the christians, in the time of Constantine, and yet is among the Greeks. From the commission to baptize, Matt. xxviii. 19. I yet think it is the proper action of baptism, and think that it should not be performed transversely, but forwards, in the most humble manner of obedience, Romans vi. 5. I have written this to let you know my views; and now beg you, in the name of Christ, to inform a poor, illiterate man, who never has had the opportunity of receiving education, though he has always desired it, the whole truth with respect to this matter. I wish you to be concise and very particular, as I shall depend on what you write to me; and every earthly advantage and popularity would I freely forego to follow the truth. I am sincerely your friend, &c.

J. H.

—  
*Reply to the Above.*

DEAR BROTHER—FOR such I recognize you, notwithstanding the varieties of opinion which you express on some topics, on which we might never agree. But if we should not, as not unity of opinion, but unity of faith, is the only true bond of christian union, I will esteem and love you, as I do every man, of whatever name, who believes sincerely that Jesus is the Messiah, and hopes in his salvation. And as to the evidence of this belief and hope, I know of none more decisive than an unfeigned obedience, and willingness to submit to the authority of the Great King.

Your objection to the weekly breaking of bread, if I can call it an objection, equally bears

against the meeting of disciples at all, for any purpose, on the first day. For if you will allow that if they meet at all, there is no difficulty insurmountable, in the way of attending to this, more than to any other institution of Jesus. As often as they can assemble for worship on that day, let them attend to all the worship, and means of edification, and comfort, which their gracious sovereign has appointed.

As to the time of the day or night when it should be observed, we have no commandment. But we have authority to attend upon this institution at whatever time of the day or night we meet. The Lord's having instituted it at night, will not oblige us to observe it at night, more than his having first eaten the passover should oblige us first to eat a paschal lamb, or to observe it in all the same circumstances. We are always to distinguish what is merely circumstantial in any institution, from the institution itself. The disciples at Troas came together upon the first day of the week to break bread; and the apostle Paul commanded the disciples at Corinth "to tarry one for another, to wait till all the expected guests had arrived," which shews that it occupied an early as well as an essential part of their worship. Any objection made to the hour of the day or night in which any christian institution should be observed is founded upon the doctrine of holy times, or sacred hours, which are Jewish and not christian. Besides, it is bad logic to draw a general conclusion from any particular occurrence. We might as well argue that, because Paul immersed the jailor at the dead hour of night, every person should be immersed at the same hour, as that because the Lord instituted the supper the night in which he was betrayed, it should be always observed at night. Nay, the same sort of logic would oblige us to observe it only the last night in our lives, if we could ascertain it, and to have no more than a dozen fellow participants. We should, on the same principle, be constrained, like the Sabbatarians, to reform our almanacs, and to decide whether it was instituted at nine or twelve o'clock at night, &c. But apostolic precedent decides this point, and not inferential reasoning.

As to the washing of the saints' feet, there is no evidence that it was a religious ordinance, or an act of social worship. Yea, there is positive evidence that it was not. Paul, in his directions to Timothy, at Ephesus, tells him that certain widows were to be supported in certain circumstances by the church. These widows were members of the church; and, as such, must have been regular attendants on, and partakers of, all its institutions.

Now, in describing the character of those widows which were to be supported by the congregation, Paul says, "If she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have diligently followed every good work." Had the washing of the saints' feet been a religious, or what is called a church or social ordinance, it would have been impossible for her to have been in the congregation, and not to have joined in it. He might as well have said, If she have been baptized, if she have eaten the supper, as to have said, "If she have washed the saints' feet" had it been a religious institution. But he ranks it not amongst social acts of worship, not amongst religious institutions, but amongst good works. When, then, it is a good work, it ought to be performed, but never placed on a level with acts of religious worship. It is a good

work when necessity calls for it; and, though a menial service, the Saviour gave an example that no christian should forget, of that condescending humility which, as christians, we are bound, both from precept and example, to exhibit towards our brethren in all cases when called upon. Besides the design of it at the time he practised it, is ascertained from a regard to the mistaken and aspiring views of the disciples respecting the nature of places of honor in his kingdom.

It was a good work, and still is a good work, more frequently in Asia than America. The soil, climate, and dress of the Asiatics more frequently called for it, than our circumstances require it. But we argue not from these circumstances—we use them as illustrations of the fact, that Paul the Apostle has positively decided that it is not a religious institution, an act of religious worship, or an ordinance in the church, but simply a good work, and I have experienced it to be a good work, in my own person, more than once, even in these United States.

Much the same sort of evidence exists in proof of the kiss of charity is not a social or church ordinance. A great deal more, however, can be said in behalf of it, than of either of the preceding items. It is argued that it is five times positively commanded in the epistles written to the congregations, set in order by the apostles. From this I would conclude that it had not been established by the apostles as an act of religious or social worship in those societies, as a part of their usual and stated worship; for if it had, there could not have existed a reason for enjoining it so repeatedly as we find it enjoined. Hence we do not find one commandment in all the epistles to the churches, respecting baptism, the Lord's supper, or the Lord's day: certain things are said of them, and in relation to them, as already established in the church, but no command to observe them. From the fact of the kiss of charity being so often mentioned, and from the circumstances of the congregations to which it is mentioned, I argue quite differently from many zealous and exemplary christians.

Another argument in favor of it is deduced from the fact that these letters were written to the churches, and that consequently the things enjoined in them, were enjoined upon the disciples in their collective capacity. True in part only. For it is not a fact that the injunctions in those epistles all respected the brethren in their meetings only, but also their conduct in the world, in their families, and in all the various relations of life.

It is admitted that the usual method of salutation in the East was, and still is, by kissing the cheek or neck of a relative or friend. In some countries, in Europe, too, this custom is quite common; but the farther west or north we travel from Constantinople or Rome, the custom is less frequent. Shaking hands is one of the most usual methods of expressing friendship and love in Europe and America.

Christians are to love one another as brethren. This is the grand standard of their affection. Whatever way, then, I express love to my natural brother, I should express it to my christian brother. If the custom of the country and those habits of expressing affection which it familiarizes to our minds, require me to salute my natural brother when I meet him, by a kiss on the lips, neck, or cheek, so let me salute my christian brother. But if the right hand of friendship and love be the highest expression

of love and affection for a natural brother, to salute a christian brother otherwise is unnatural. For example—suppose that after an absence of seven years, I were introduced into a room where one of my natural brothers and one of my christian brethren were assembled, and that I should kiss the latter and shake hands with the former; would not this diversity be unnatural and contrary to the generic precept, "Love as brethren." I contend, then, that neither the customs in dress, wearing the beard, or mode of salutation, is the meaning of the requirements, of the precepts, or examples of the apostles; but that the genius and spirit of their injunctions and examples, are, in these things, expressed by the customs and habits which our country and kindred adopt, and by means of which we express the spirit and temper which they inculcated and exhibited.

But to make this a regular and standing ordinance of christian assemblies, appears to be entirely unauthorized by any hint, allusion, or command, in the apostolic writings. I speak neither from prejudice nor aversion to this custom. For my own part, I can cordially comply with either custom, having been born in a country where this mode of salutation was more common than in this; but to advocate or enjoin it as of apostolic authority, I cannot. When misunderstandings and alienations take place amongst brethren, and a reconciliation has been effected; when long absence has been succeeded by a joyful interview; or when about to separate for a long time, the highest expressions of love and most affectionate salutations are naturally called for, which the customs of the country have made natural. And these become holy amongst christian brethren on account of the high considerations which elicit them.

In a word, whatever promotes love amongst christian brethren, whatever may increase their affection, or whatever expressions of it can best exhibit it to others, according to the customs and feelings of the people amongst whom we live, is certainly inculcated by the apostles. And if christian societies should exactly and literally imitate and obey this injunction, no man, as far as I can learn, has a right to condemn or censure them. Nor have they who practise according to the letter, a right to insist upon others to think or practise in a similar way, so long as they exhibit that they love one another as brethren.

With regard to trine immersion, and the manner in which the action should be performed, we have neither precept nor precedent. In the debate alluded to, instead of two, it is, I think, in the errata, two hundred years after the apostolic age, when we first read of trine immersion. That immersion is always spoken of as one act, is most evident from all that is said about christian immersion. It is true that the scribes and elders, as indeed the Jews generally, had a plurality of immersions; but the christian action is a unit. There is no command that a person should be immersed three times in order to constitute one baptism or immersion. Nor is there an example of the kind on record, not even a hint or allusion to such a custom. Therefore, we cannot teach it as of divine, but as of human authority. And in what position the body should be disposed of in the act, is as immaterial as in what fashion a coat or mantle should be made. To bring the christian religion to inculcate matters of this sort, would be to convert the New Testament into a ritual like the book of Leviticus, and to make christian obedience as low and servile as that of the weak and beggarly elements.



Thus, my dear sir, I have hinted at the topics you proposed. I should have written to you "personally" long since; but in such cases, here the matter is of general interest, I prefer, as opportunity serves, to lay it before the public. And as to the long delay, I have to urge by way of apology, that I am this winter, more than ever before, absorbed in business of the highest, most solemn and responsible nature. I have under my care the publication of a new Translation of the New Testament. Though the translation was made ready to my hand, yet the necessary examination of every word, and comparison of it with the other translations of note, for the purpose of assisting the English reader with the best means of understanding this blessed book, has given me incomparably more labor than I had any idea of. It is indeed, to me a delightful and profitable employment, having assembled all translations of note, and even those of no great reputation, I am under the happy necessity of reading, examining, and comparing all, and in notes critical and explanatory, elucidating the text when it can be improved. But a small portion of my labor can be seen, or will meet the public eye, because, in many instances, after the most diligent examination and comparison, the translation given is adopted in preference to all others; and my labor simply results in the conviction that the translation of the standard works is the best. It is a work that I dare not delay, or yield to any other demands upon me, however imperative. I have more than sixty letters at this time on file unanswered, and many of my correspondents are got out of patience with me; but I have a good, or many good apologies to make. If they will only bear with me this once, I hope to make them return in full.

Wishing you favor, mercy and peace, from our Lord and Saviour, and glad to hear from you at any time, I subscribe myself your brother in the hope of immortality. A. C.

February 25, 1826.

#### *The Bible.*

THERE is, perhaps, no book read more than the bible, and it appears as though no book generally read was less understood. This, no doubt, has arisen from a combination of causes which exists in relation to no other book in the world. If any other book in the English language had as many commentaries written upon it, had as many systems based upon it, or upon particular constructions of it; if any other book were exhibited in the same dislocated and distracted light, had as many debates about its meaning, and as many different senses attributed to its words; if any other book were read as the scriptures are commonly read, in the same broken, disconnected and careless manner; with the same stock of prejudices and preconceived opinions, there is every reason to believe that it would be as unintelligible and as little understood as the bible appears to be. We often wonder at the stupidity of the Jews in our Saviour's time in relation to his pretensions and claims, and no doubt posterity will wonder at our stupidity and ignorance of a book which we read so often and profess to venerate so highly. There is a greater similarity in the causes and reasons of their and our indocility than we are aware. The evil one has the same interest in obscuring this volume which he had in obscuring the evidences of his mission; and the vitiosity of man, both natural and acquired, exhibits itself in the same aspect towards the

bible as it did in reference to the person concerning whom it was all written.

But among the myriads who religiously read the bible, why is it that so little of the spirit of it, seems to be caught, possessed, and exhibited? I will give one reason, and those more wise may add to it others. Many read the bible to have a general idea of what it contains, as a necessary part of a polite education; many read it to attain the means of proving the dogmas which they already profess; many read it with the design of being extremely wise in its contents; many read it that they may be able to explain it to others; and alas! but few appear to read it supremely and exclusively that they may practise it; that they may be conformed to it, not only in their outward deportment, but in the spirit and temper of their minds. This is the only reading of it which is really profitable to men, which rewards us for our pains, which consoles us now, and which will be remembered for ages to come, with inexpressible delight. In this way, and in this way only, the spirit of it is caught, retained and exhibited. Some such readers seem to be enrapt or inspired with its contents. Every sentiment and feeling which it imparts seem to be the sentiments and feeling of their hearts; and the bible is to their religion what their spirit is to their body—the life and activity thereof. The bible to such a person is the medium of conversation with the Lord of Life. He speaks to Heaven in the language of Heaven, when he prays in the belief of its truth, and the Great God speaks to him in the same language; and thus the true and intelligent christian walks with God and converses with him every day. One hour of such company is more to be desired than a thousand years spent in intimate converse with the wisest philosophers and most august potentates that earth ever saw. EDITOR.

#### *The Many against the Few.*

THE few have had a conflict with the many in every attempt towards reformation since error got the better of truth. This for a long time must uniformly be the case. Therefore, none ought to be discouraged because of the number or influence of those leagued in support of any error. The history of the world is replete with information and encouragement on this subject. Truth fairly presented, and enforced by the good examples of its advocates, has ever triumphed, and will continue to triumph till the victory is complete. EDITOR.

No. 9.]

APRIL 3, 1826.

#### *Christian Morality.—No. I.*

THE history of the world down from its first page till the present time represents man to be precisely such a being, in respect to moral character, as the bible describes him. In his natural, or rather preternatural character, he exhibits himself to be ignorant of God, alienated from him, filled with enmity, hatred, selfishness, ingratitude, and a false ambition. However the reflex light of christianity in civilized nations, and what is called the science of morals appropriated and enforced in the social compact and forms of government of Pagan nations, have imposed restraints upon these evil principles, have offered rewards to virtue, and assigned punishments to vice, still the radical principles of human depravity exhibit themselves in the children of nature, under the best human culture; and thereby prove, that, however they may be restrained, they still exist in all the bitterness of moral corruption. Hence all the crime, misery, and wretchedness, which appear in the human family.

A mind alienated from God is alienated from man. This is a truism of greater momentum in morals, than any axiom of Newton's is in physics. Hence every scheme which has been adopted for moralizing and improving the social character of man, which has not been based upon the above truism, has failed of its object. Like the universal *specifics* of empyrics, or the nostrums of quacks, they have proved the disgrace of their authors, and the injury, if not the ruin, of the too credulous recipients. The christian scheme of moralizing and improving the world recommends itself to the philosopher upon his own principles; while false philosophy ascribes effects to inadequate causes, and would produce results regardless of the fitness of means, true philosophy requires adequate causes, and means suitably adapted to the ends in view.—Thus the christian scheme of moralizing and felicitating the world is based upon the actual condition of the human family, and regards every symptom and exhibition of the complex case of human vileness. But it begins at the root of the disorder. Perfect moral health can be enjoyed only in the temperature of perfect love to God, and on the food of perfect obedience to his will. A comfortable degree of this health can be enjoyed in this life only by a reconciliation of the mind to God, which necessarily produces benevolence in its manifold exhibitions towards man. The christian scheme of ameliorating society in this world, and fitting man for heaven, is based upon these leading principles:—

1. That man is alienated from God through ignorance of him, and by his wicked works.

2. That this ignorance, alienation, and these wicked works, must necessarily eventuate in his ruin, unless he be delivered from them.

3. That wicked works proceeding from alienation of mind, and alienation of mind proceeding from ignorance of the moral character of God, the true and rational course of procedure in the deliverance of man from this state, commences with imparting to his mind just views of the character of God, which, when apprehended, reconcile the mind to God and necessarily produce philanthropy or benevolence to man. On these principles, which the wise men of this world on other subjects call philosophical, does the christian religion proceed.

The rudiments of christianity, or the first lessons which it imparts, are comprehended in one sentence, viz. "God is love." This does not, in its scriptural connexions, represent him as having no other perfections, natural or moral, but that of love; but it represents him in his procedure to men, in the whole origin and process of the work of reconciliation, in the amelioration of the character and condition of men, as supereminently displaying benevolence or philanthropy.

It is the love of men, and not of individuals, which is called "philanthropy" in the New Testament. Those systems of religion which begin and terminate in one principle, viz. that God loves only one nation or a few individuals of all nations as men, divest the christian religion of God's means of reconciling human beings to himself. On this principle it becomes equally unavailing to the few who are loved as sinners, as it does to the many who are not loved as sinners. For no means are adapted to reconcile the mind of man to God but such as exhibit his benevolence to men indiscriminately. So long as the divine benevolence is represented as without any known object, as being a secret to every

human being, neither those who are embraced in it, nor those who are left out of it, can derive one ray of hope from all the preacher can say about it, until they discover something in themselves which warrants an opinion that they may be amongst the special objects of it. Hence their piety originates from a religious selfishness which enters into all their thoughts and expressions on the subject of the favor of God!

All the terrors of the Lord cannot produce love in any creature alienated from him, else those evil spirits which kept not their first estate would long since have been reconciled to him. Nothing but the exhibition of love can destroy enmity. Hence, in the word of reconciliation, which the apostles announced, the most emphatic sentence is, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him may not perish, but enjoy eternal life." They never told any congregation that God loved a world which nobody knew any thing about; that he loved a few here and there; and who was or was not one of these, nobody could tell. Such a representation of God's election, or purpose, is not worthy of the name of gospel or "good news to all people," or indeed to any people. But of this again.

To bring man to love God and one another, is the high end of the christian religion. This is happiness. The happiness of heaven is the happiness of perfect love. The intelligent christian expects to be introduced into a society of the most refined and exalted intelligences, whose love to each other will be incapable of augmentation. Hence the standard of christian perfection is graduated by love to the brethren—and just in so far as we have progressed in the cultivation of complacent affection and benevolence, so far have we obtained a taste for the society of the saved.

One leading design of the institution called the church, was to give its members a taste for the society of heaven; for the fact is, but very few have any taste for such a society, and for such entertainments as the intelligent and perfect christian pants after, in the upper world. Many christians talk a good deal about heaven; but from their taste, as it exhibits itself, they would like, it is true, to be in the palace of the Great King, but they would rather be in the kitchen amongst the servants, than amidst his attendants that wait upon his royal person. They think more upon being safe than upon the high enjoyments, and talk more on escaping the burning lake than on all the rational delights of pure and exalted spirits before the throne of the Almighty.

Men have made many attempts to promote good will amongst a few—whom nature, interest, solemn pledges, climate or country had united. But these are poor substitutes for the grand scheme of consociation devised and published by the Almighty. Every tie has been broken or worn out, which men have devised as a substitute for the ties of enlightened christian affection. But what consideration can unite men in the purest affection, as the manifold cords of the christian religion?

To the ties of nature, to all the bonds that draw the heart of man to man, christianity adds considerations infinitely more endearing. The one faith, the one hope, the one Spirit, the one Lord, open a new world of relationships. Christians are united by the highest, strongest, noblest ties that human reason knows; each of which is stronger than death, more triumphant than the grave. That we are redeemed by the same



blood, bought by the same Lord, purified by the same Spirit, embraced in the same love of the Father; that we are to be joint participants of the same glorious resurrection, co-heirs of the same immortality, and joint inheritors of the same triumphant kingdom: that we are to be fellow guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb, to attend the funeral of nature, and to be fellow citizens with all the pure and exalted intelligences in the universe in one enraptured throng forever, are considerations, if realized, which ought, one would think, to produce but one feeling towards all the household of faith, banish all discord, cover all defects, excite all sympathies, and elicit all brotherly love.

This is that fountain, the streams of which are pure morality. That formal, stiff, forced, mechanical, and legal morality which appears detached from these principles, which grows from another root, is like the wild olive or forest grape, which, while exhibiting some of the appearances, possess not those valuable properties, on account of which, we appreciate those cultivated by man.

We are sorry to have to remark, that there appears to be a great falling off from the morality of the christian religion, as well as from the ancient order of things in the christian communities. This is in a measure to be traced to the new bonds of union which have been adopted in different religious communities, and to attaching an undue importance to the little party shibboleths, which, in some societies, become at once the standard of both religion and morality. These are desultory remarks, and intended as prefatory to a series of essays on christian morality. In the course of which we are apprehensive that we shall find even amongst christians of the present day, that the standard of christian morality is many degrees lower than the apostolic.

EDITOR.

The following letter is from the pen of one of the most intelligent, pious, and worthy bishops in Virginia; whose standing in the learned world obtained for him the honorary degree of D. D. and whose piety and intelligence refused the title as a badge of popery. Believing this letter to be of importance to myself, and to the religious community at large, I here lay it before the public with my remarks in reply to the same.

ED. C. B.

King & Queen Co. Va. Dec. 6, 1825.

Brother Campbell,

DEAR SIR—ACCORDING to my promise to you (and I may say to God also) I commence a letter of correspondence with you.—Your preaching among us reminded me of Apollos who displayed, as we moderns say, great talents, or, as the scripture says, “was an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures.” Apollos, however, with all his eloquence and might in the scriptures, submitted to be taught the way of God more perfectly, and that too, by a mechanic and his wife. After this he helped those much who had believed through grace. May I, though inferior to Aquila, &c. attempt a reformation in principle of one, not only eloquent and mighty in the scriptures, but deeply learned in all the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans. So far as I can judge by your writings and preaching, you are substantially a Sandemanian or Haldanian. I know you differ from them in some points, but in substance you occupy their ground. Now I am not about to fall out with them as heretics of the black sort. I think they have many excellent things among them, things I

would gladly see more prevalent among us. But in some respects they are far from pure christianity. Forbearance is certainly a christian grace, strongly recommended both by precept and example, in the word of God. It is an important branch of charity, without which knowledge is nothing, and the eloquence of angels nothing more than a tinkling cymbal. Without christian forbearance, no church fellowship can be maintained; at least, so I think. The Haldanians, I am persuaded, are greatly deficient on this head. I do not say they are wholly without forbearance, but they limit its exercise to too narrow bounds. In all church decisions, say they, there must be an unanimity, all must think alike. However desirable this may be, it is impossible—men will differ in opinions honestly; hence, unless allowance be made for ignorance, for humors, and even for obstinacy, there will be little peace; or, however, peace cannot subsist long. The strong must bear the burdens of the weak, and not please themselves. I name this one case out of many in which they use too little forbearance. You will ask, are there no limits? Doubtless the same apostle who in one place says, “I please all men in all things,” in another says, “do I seek to please men?” The essence of the gospel must be maintained at the expense of even life itself, and to do this more effectually, we must use forbearance in minor things. Gentleness of spirit becomes a servant of the Lord, and especially towards those who oppose truth as being the most likely to bring them to repentance. But among the Haldanians (judging from writings) a gentle spirit is rarely to be found. Harsh and bitter sarcasms are the weapons with which they fight their opponents. This too I am the more disposed to think applies to them as a sect, because I have known some of their party who have appeared, in private conversation, to be mild and gentle indeed, and every way pleasant; but when brought out in writing or public speaking, seemed to have another kind of temper. If you will bear with me, I will suggest that this seems to be the case with the editor of the Christian Baptist. As a man, in private circles, mild, pleasant, and affectionate; as a writer, rigid and satirical, beyond all the bounds of scripture allowance. I have taken the Christian Baptist now from its beginning, i. e. I have read them from their first publication, and my opinion has been uniformly the same.—That, although sensible and edited with ability, it has been deficient in a very important point, a *New Testament spirit*. It will not do to say there are hard sayings to be found in the scriptures. True; but that is far from being the general tenor of them. These hard expressions are to be found only at the end of long forbearance, and then they are not contrary to the spirit of christianity. This, may I say, is the most serious objection to the Debate on Baptism. The book exhibits baptism in a most lucid point, sufficient, I should think, to convince every Paidobaptist that may ever read it. But the bitterness of the expression universally blinds their minds with resentment so as to stop up the entrance to truth. You will say it was but a retort to more bitter things from the other side. I answer, truth requires no such defence. Hence the persecutions of every age have been on the side of error. But truth, holy truth, with God on its side, requires no such support. 'Tis a tender plant that dwindles under such rough culture. So much for forbearance, gentleness, &c. Your opinions on some other points are, I think, dan-

gerous, unless you are misunderstood, such as casting off the Old Testament, exploding experimental religion in its common acceptation, denying the existence of gifts in the present day, commonly believed to exist among all spiritual christians, such as preaching, &c. Some other of your opinions, though true, are pushed to extremes, such as those upon the use of creeds, confessions, &c. &c. Your views of ministerial support, directed against abuses on that head, would be useful; but levelled against all support to ministers (unless by way of alms) is so palpably contrary to scripture and common justice, that I persuade myself that there must be some misunderstanding. In short, your views are generally so contrary to those of the Baptists in general, that if a party was to go fully into the practice of your principles, I should say a new sect had sprung up, radically different from the baptists as they now are. But I have almost gotten through my paper with finding fault, an article too, that I have not heretofore dealt much in. Shall I close by telling you that we all feel much interest in your welfare personally, that your mild and sociable manners, &c. procured among us not respect only, but brotherly love and christian affection, and that much of your preaching was admired for its eloquence and excellency, and that if you would dwell upon these great points chiefly, such as faith, hope, charity, &c. you would be viewed by us as having a special command from Him whom we hope you love, to feed his lambs and his sheep. By way of apology for you, and a small compliment to our folks, I was really struck while you were among us, that the acrimonious treatment that you had received from others had pushed you to certain severities and singularities, which, if you dwelt among us, you would relinquish. This letter is designed as a private correspondence, but if any good should arise from its publication, I should have no objection, provided it came out wholly.

Yours affectionately, R. B. S.

P. S.—I was writing this, from first to last, two or three weeks. I yesterday got your December C. B. with which I am much pleased.

#### Reply.

VERY DEAR SIR:—BEING very sensible that sundry items in your letter are matters of general importance, and of general interest, after due deliberation on its contents, I considered it my duty to lay it before the public. And had it not been that you wished, in case of its publication, that it should wholly appear, I would have suppressed certain complimentary expressions, which, however kind the motives which dictated them, are more flattering on your part, than deserving on mine. The benevolent christian spirit which appears in every sentence, while it explains and seasons your commendations, gives weight and emphasis to your censures. The latter, however, are those in which I am most concerned, and in which most will agree in opinion with you. To myself, indeed, they are the more acceptable; having long since learned that the rebukes of a friend are faithful, while the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

I have no design to plead not guilty to the whole of your corrections, nor to say that I do not need some of your reproofs and admonitions; but I have some explanations to offer, and misunderstandings to correct, which, I believe, will be as acceptable to you, as they are necessary for the sake of others.

To pay due regard to the sundry items in your

letter, I shall follow the order in which they appear; and, in the first place, you say, "So far as I can judge by your writings and preaching, you are substantially a Sandemanian, or Haldanian." This is substantially affirmed of me by many who have never seen nor read one volume of the writings of Sandeman or Haldane: and with the majority it has great weight, who attach to these names something as heretical and damnable as the tenets of Cerinthus and the Nicolaitans. I have not myself ever read all the works of those men, but I have read more of them than I approve, and more of them than they who impute to me their opinions, as heresy. I was some fourteen years ago a great admirer of the works of John Newton, I read them with great delight, and I still love the author and admire many of his sentiments. He was not a staunch Episcopalian, though he died in that connexion. In an apology to a friend for his departure from the tenets of that sect in some instances, he said, "Whenever he found a pretty feather in any bird, he endeavored to attach it to his own plumage, and although he had become a very speckled bird, so much so that no one of any one species would altogether own him as belonging to them, he flattered himself that he was the prettiest bird among them." From that day to the present I have been looking for pretty feathers, and I have become more speckled than Newton of Olney; but whether I have as good a taste in the selection, must be decided by connoisseurs in ornithology.

Concerning Sandeman and Haldane, how they can be associated under one species, is to me a matter of surprise. The former a Paido-Baptist, the latter a Baptist; the former as keen, as sharp, as censorious, as acrimonious as Juvenal; the latter as mild, as charitable, as condescending as any man this age has produced. As authors I know them well. The one is like the mountain-storm that roars among the cliffs; the other like the balmy zephyrs that breathe upon banks of violets. That their views were the same on some points, is as true as that Luther, Calvin, and Wesley agreed in many points.

I was once much puzzled on the subject of Harvey's Dialogues, I mean his Theron and Aspasio. I appropriated one winter season for examining this subject. I assembled all the leading writers of that day on these subjects. I laid before me Robert Sandeman, Harvey, Marshall, Bellamy, Glass, Cudworth, and others of minor fame in this controversy. I not only read, but studied and wrote off in miniature their respective views. I had Paul and Peter, James and John, on the same table: I took nothing upon trust. I did not care for the authority, reputation, or standing of one of the systems a grain of sand. I never weighed the consequences of embracing any one of the systems as affecting my standing or reputation in the world. Truth (not who says so) was my sole object. I found much entertainment in the investigation. And I will not blush, nor do I fear to say, that, in this controversy, Sandeman was like a giant among dwarfs. He was like Sampson with the gates and posts of Gaza on his shoulders. I was the most prejudiced against him, and the most in favor of Harvey, when I commenced this course of reading. Yet I now believe that not one of them was exactly on the track of the apostles. I have also read Fuller's Strictures on Sandemanianism, which I suppose to be the medium of most of the information possessed on that subject in this country. This is the poorest performance Andrew Fuller ever gave to the world.



I have not read it for a long time: it is on the shelves of my library, but I will not at this time brush the dust off it. If I remember right, he concedes every thing in the first two or three pages, which he censures in the rest of his work, except it be the spirit of the system. And the fact is (which, indeed, he indirectly acknowledges) that Andrew Fuller was indebted more to John Glass and Robert Sandeman, than to any two men in Britain, for the best part of his views—I will not here pause to inquire whether he wrote those strictures to save himself from the obloquy of being called a Sandemanian, as some conjecture, or whether he wrote them to give a blow to Archibald M'Lean, of Edinburgh, who had driven him from the arena some years before: but I will say it is a very poor production, and proves nothing that either Robert Sandeman or Archibald M'Lean felt any concern in opposing.

But, my dear sir, while I am pretty well acquainted with all this controversy, since John Glass was excommunicated by the high church of Scotland, for preaching that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, which is now more than a century ago; and while I acknowledge myself a debtor to Glass, Sandeman, Harvey, Cudworth, Fuller, and M'Lean; as much as to Luther, Calvin, and John Wesley; I candidly and unequivocally avow, that I do not believe that any one of them had clear and consistent views of the Christian religion as a whole. Some of them, no doubt, had clear and correct views of some of its truths, nay, of many of them, but they were impeded in their inquiries by a false philosophy and metaphysics, which fettered their own understanding in some of the plainest things. For instance, with the exception of Fuller and M'Lean, they all contended for the popish rite of baby baptism or sprinkling. As to James Haldane, I am less indebted to him than to most of the others. I was much prejudiced against his views and proceedings when in Scotland, owing to my connexion with those who were engaged in a controversy with his brother Robert, and against the system in general. I have, since my arrival in this country, read some two or three pieces from his pen:—one in favor of infant baptism, and one against it, and some others I do not recollect. I have heard a great deal of him and his brother Robert, from members of their connexion, who have emigrated to this country; and while I do not believe that there lives upon the earth a more godly, pious, primitive, christian, than James Haldane of Edinburgh; and few, if any, more generally intelligent in the christian scripture, you express my views of that system generally. Being possessed of a very large estate, and connected by marriage with some of the most illustrious families of North Britain; these two brothers, especially the elder, had much in their power. From the best information I have gathered, Robert Haldane has expended something like four hundred thousand dollars, in what he deemed to be the cause of the Redeemer; and, no doubt, will have his reward. He now sees, and acknowledges, that much of this money, though benevolently appropriated, was misapplied—He had, at one time, a great notion for training poor and pious young men for "the gospel ministry," and I think, in a few years he had some fifty or sixty educated, boarded, and equipped for the field, at his own expense. Many of those, without the spirit of their master, became just such spirited men as you describe. Some of them, too, excellent men, caught the spirit of Robert

Sandeman, and became fierce as lions in the garb of lambs, Hyper-Calvinists, Separatists, with whom "tenth or ten thousandth broke the chain alike." No matter if an agreement existed in nine hundred and ninety-nine opinions, if in the thousandth there was a difference, the chain was severed, and they were to one another as heathen men and publicans.

While I thus acknowledge myself a debtor to those persons, I must say, that the debt, in most instances, is a very small one. I am indebted, upon the whole, as much to their errors as to their virtues, for these have been to me as beacons to the mariner, who might otherwise have run upon the rocks and shoals. And, although it is a catachresis to say, that a sailor is indebted to those who have fallen upon rocks, on which he might have been wrecked, had not others before him been unfortunate in this way; yet, I must acknowledge, that the largest amount of my debts is of this kind, though, in some instances, I have been edified and instructed by their labors.

For the last ten years I have not looked into the works of any of these men; and have lost the taste which I once had for controversial reading of this sort. And during this period my inquiries into the christian religion have been almost exclusively confined to the holy scriptures. And I can assure you that the scriptures, when made their own interpreter, and accompanied with earnest desires to the author of these writings, have become, to me, a book entirely new, and unlike what they were when read and consulted as a book of reference—I call no man master upon the earth; and although my own father has been a diligent student, and teacher of the christian religion since his youth; and, in my opinion, understands this book as well as any person with whom I am acquainted, yet there is no man with whom I have debated more, and reasoned more, on all subjects of this kind, than he—I have been so long disciplined in the school of free inquiry, that, if I know my own mind, there is not a man upon the earth whose authority can influence me, any farther than he comes with the authority of evidence, reason, and truth. To arrive at this state of mind is the result of many experiments and efforts; and to me has been arduous beyond expression. I have endeavored to read the scriptures as though no one had read them before me; and I am as much on my guard against reading them to-day, through the medium of my own views yesterday, or a week ago, as I am against being influenced by any foreign name, authority, or system, whatever.

You say that "those people have many excellent things among them—things you would gladly see among us." So say I. You think "they are very defective in forbearance." This may be still true for any thing I know; but one thing I do know, that several congregations in this connexion are far more "forbearing" than the Baptists in Virginia; for several of them receive unbaptized persons to the Lord's table, on the ground of forbearance. The congregation in Edinburgh in connexion with James Haldane, and that in Tubermore in connexion with Alexander Carson, two of the most prominent congregations in the connexion, do actually dispense with baptism on the ground of "forbearance." I believe there are some others who carry "forbearance" thus far. These people have been much slandered at home and abroad by an interested priesthood, and I do know that many things reported of them in this country are false.

They say that when a Paido-Baptist gives evidence that he is a christian, and cannot be convinced that infant baptism is a human tradition, he ought to be received into a christian congregation as a brother, if he desires it, irrespective of this weakness. They were once more tenacious of their peculiar views than at present.

But on the subject of forbearance I have to remark that there is no greater misapplication of a word in our language that I know of, than of this one. In strict propriety it does not apply at all to the subject in relation to which it is commonly used. No man can be said to forbear with another, except in such cases as he has done him an injury. Now when christians differ in opinion upon any subject, unless it can be made appear that the opinion of A. is injurious to B. the latter cannot forbear with the former. There is no room nor occasion for forbearance; for B. is not injured by the opinion of A. To say that christians must exercise forbearance with one another because of difference of opinion, is admitting that they have a right to consider themselves injured, or that one christian has a right to consider himself injured because another differs in opinion from him. It is precisely the same mistake which is committed by those who ask the civil authorities to tolerate all or any religious opinions. The mere asking for toleration recognizes a right which no civil government possesses, and establishes a principle of calamitous consequences, viz. that opinions contrary to the majority, or the national creed, are a public injury, which it is in the power of government to punish or tolerate, according to their intelligence and forbearance. Civil rulers have no right to tolerate or punish men on account of their opinions in matters of religion. Neither have christians a right to condemn their brethren for differences of opinion, nor even to talk of forbearing with one another in matters of opinion. The scriptures speak of the forbearance of God, and teach that christians in certain cases should forbear with one another in cases of injury sustained; but never, that I can see, on account of matters of opinion. A person might as well be said to forbear with his natural brother because he was only ten years old, or five feet high, or because he had grey eyes; as to forbear with his christian brother because he differed from him in some opinions. I know that we all use the term forbearance in a very unwarrantable sense, and that it is difficult to find a term every way appropriate to communicate correct ideas on this subject. To bear with, or allow a brother to exercise his own judgment, is no doubt all that you intend by the term, and this is certainly inculcated in the apostolic writings. And I am willing to carry this principle to its greatest possible extent; though, as you say, there is and must be a stopping place. So long as any man, woman, or child, declares his confidence in Jesus of Nazareth as God's own Son, that he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; or, in other words, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Saviour of men; and so long as he exhibits a willingness to obey him in all things according to his knowledge, so long will I receive him as a christian brother and treat him as such.

What you say of the "*Christian Baptist*," as being deficient in one important point, "*a New Testament spirit*," next merits my attention.—This may be true; and I am thankful to you for your kind remarks upon this topic. One thing, however, I can say, that I am conscious of the

most benevolent intentions and kind feelings towards the persons of those very men on whose conduct and measures I have animadverted with the most apparent severity. But I will not say that what I have written exhibits this spirit to the best advantage. I can, I acknowledge, with the utmost good nature and benevolence, say and write many things that may appear, and that to strangers do appear, to be dictated by a very different spirit. I know that what you say of the general spirit of the New Testament is true; but there is one thing on which I have thought a good deal, which I think escapes the observation of many, viz. that if the apostles were on earth now, and were to write upon the present state of things in christendom, their writings would appear to be very different in spirit from those which they wrote when first declaring God's philanthropy in the gift of his Son. They then spoke and wrote in the full spirit of this benevolence. But when a defection began to appear, and apostacy began to shew its face, the apostle began to "*change his voice*," and to exhort others to carry on a *good warfare* against those seducing spirits, and to reprove, rebuke, and that with sharpness too. Judging from what they said when false teachers began to appear, both of them and to others concerning them, I am of the opinion that the same spirit of benevolence which appears in their public annunciation of the gospel, would lead them now to speak in a style similar to that in which the epistle of Jude and the second epistle of Peter was written.—These things I do not advance as an excuse for myself in all respects, for I know that few will apprehend that the "*Christian Baptist*" is written in the spirit in which I am conscious it is. But I think that the New Testament spirit is a spirit of meekness, of mildness, of benevolence, and of decided hostility to all and every corruption of the gospel. The physician is not less benevolent when, as a surgeon, he amputates a limb, than when he administers an anodyne.—Yet there would be a manifest difference in his spirit and temper in the judgment of a spectator who did not enter into his views and motives in these two actions. There is one fact which will not be out of place to state here. It is this:—There are many topics which would lead to the exhibition of what would appear in the fullest sense, and in your own sense of the words, "*a New Testament Spirit*," which I would have gladly introduced into this work; but owing to its circumscribed dimensions and the force of opposition, I have had to withhold or to cause them to yield to those topics which are the least conducive to what, in the estimation of the majority, is the spirit you would wish to see more strikingly exhibited. Hence so much of one species of composition gives a general character, both to the matter and manner of the work. So much for a "*New Testament spirit*." I will conclude this item by observing that I hope to profit from your remarks on this subject.

On my "*casting off the Old Testament*," and exploding experimental religion, in its common acceptation; denying the existence of gifts in the present day, commonly believed to exist among all spiritual christians, such as preaching," which you think "*are dangerous*," unless I am misunderstood, I have not room to say much at present. On the subject of "*experimental religion*" some remarks will appear in the next number under another head; and with reference to "*casting off the Old Testament*," I will just observe that I know not of one sentence in the *Christian Baptist* that holds out such



an idea. As to divine authority, I have at all times viewed it and represented it as equal to the New. But that Christians are not under it, but under the New, I have contended, and must still contend. And as to the present existence of "spiritual gifts" in the church, in the New Testament sense of these words, I do not believe that any such exist. But if you mean to call preaching, teaching, praying, praising, exhorting, and ruling, *spiritual gifts*, I do believe that such gifts do exist, and that there is sufficient room for a very liberal exhibition of them in the present day. I have thought that my essays on the work and office of the Holy Spirit had sufficiently exhibited my views on this subject, so as to preclude misapprehension. Any objections, candid or uncandid, against the views exhibited in these essays, I will minutely consider whenever presented to me in an intelligible form.

But I hasten to your remark on ministerial support. You say—"Your views of ministerial support, directed against abuses on that head, would be useful; but levelled against all support to ministers, (unless by way of alms,) is so palpably contrary to scripture and common justice, that I persuade myself that there must be some misunderstanding." Now, my dear sir, the words "ministerial support" are so vague and so latitudinarian, that I do not believe that I could be understood by any person who uses them in the common acceptation, if I speak in the style of the New Testament. On this subject I have said but little, except by way of allusion to existing customs, and have generally condemned, and must condemn the popular course. I have said something on the word *minister*, which I believe to be of importance in this question. But I have not arrived in my course of essays on "the Restoration" to that place which would lead me to exhibit what I deem the views of the New Testament on the bishop's office, call, ordination, and support. That any man is to be paid at all for preaching, i. e. making sermons and pronouncing them; or that any man is to be hired for a stipulated sum to preach and pray, and expound scripture, by the day, month, or year, I believe to be a relic of popery.

The difference between a hireling "minister" and a bishop, I will endeavor to illustrate in my next essay on the "*Ancient order of Things*," to which I would refer you for the present. I do know, for I inquired when in your vicinity, that you have never esteemed gain to be godliness, and that although you have labored much as a bishop and as a preacher, you have never made it, sought it, or found it to be a lucrative calling. And I am sure that you do not object to any thing you have seen in the Christian Baptist on this subject, because it either has operated, or was feared to operate, against you. In the words of the apostle, "You have not thus spoken that it should be so done to you." I say I am convinced of this, and that you speak in behalf of others, and for the sake of consistent views of the Christian religion.

Your last observations in your table of corrections I come now to notice. It is this: "In short, your views are generally so contrary to those of the Baptists in general, that if a party was to go fully into the practice of your principles, I should say a new sect had sprung up," &c. This is neither a commendation nor a reprobation of the "Christian Baptist," until one or two questions are answered.

In the first place, Are the Baptists generally now following in the steps of the primitive

church? Are they up to the model of the New Testament? Upon the answer given to this query your last remark conveys praise or blame. If they are in the millennial state, or in the primitive state of the church, then every thing that would change their order and practice is to be reprobated and discountenanced by every Christian. But if not, every well meant effort to bring them up to that state, as far as scripture and reason approve, ought to be countenanced, aided, and abetted by every one that loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Again it may be asked for the sake of variety, Would not a congregation of saints, built exactly upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly, appear like a new sect arising amongst the Baptists, or any other sect in this country?

And, in the third place, Ought not every Christian who prays for the millennial state, or a restoration of the ancient order of things, to labor to promote so desirable an event by all the means in his power?

On the view taken of these questions, and the answer given to them, depends the import and weight of your last remark. In the mean time I must come to a close, referring you on this last topic to my reply to "An Independent Baptist" in the next number, for a more luminous expose of the principle embraced in it; assuring you at the same time that I will maturely weigh and candidly attend to any remarks you may please to favor me with on any topic embraced in this reply, or on any other embraced in this work. I hope always to possess, and to be able to exhibit, the spirit and temper of a disciple of him who taught his followers to love and obey the truth, and who gave us an example in his own person, that the most exalted, glorious and happy course of life, is to do the will of our Heavenly Father.

With sentiments of the highest respect and affection, I remain your fellow servant in the hope of immortality.

EDITOR.

#### *A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.* No. XII.

##### The Bishop's Office.—No. 1.

A BISHOP without a charge or cure, is like a husband without a wife, a contradiction in sense, if not in terms. There must be sheep before there can be a shepherd, and there must be a congregation before there can be an overseer. There must be work to be done before there is occasion for a workman. From all which it is plain there must exist a congregation of disciples before there is any office, officer, call, ordination, or charge concerning them. A bishop without a congregation, a president without a people, a teacher without pupils, is like an eye without a head, a tongue without a mouth, a hand without a body. From these incontestible dictates of common sense, if there were not a hint in the Oracles of Heaven upon the subject, it would appear that the existence of bishops or overseers was, in the order of nature, in the order of reason, in the order of God, posterior to the existence of churches or congregations. But the apostolic writings are as plain as the dictates of common sense upon this subject. They teach us that the office of bishops was the last thing instituted, or, in other words, that the apostles and evangelists, had fulfilled their commission, i. e. had proclaimed the gospel, made disciples, baptized them, convened them, and taught them

the christian doctrine, before they suggested to them the necessity, utility, and importance of the office of a bishop. Thus we find the apostles in their subsequent or last visits to the congregations which they had planted, instituting, appointing, and giving directions concerning the bishop's office.

From these premises it must follow that, as the enlisting of soldiers is previous to their training; the making of disciples, to teaching them; the gathering of congregations, to setting them in order; necessarily the bishop's work is different from that of a missionary, a preacher, an evangelist, in the New Testament import of these terms. That the work of a bishop is different from every other work requisite to forming a congregation is self-evident from one fact, viz: *That this work or office did not originate until congregations existed.*

How congregations first came into existence, is one question; how they are to be brought into existence now, is another question; and what is a christian bishop, or his work, is a question essentially distinct from both. To arrive at clear and distinct views on any subject, we must simplify, not confound; we must take one topic at a time; we must view it in all its bearings, and still keep it separate and distinct from every other.

We are now on the bishop's office, as presented to us in the primitive congregations, and not the question how these congregations were gathered then, nor how congregations are to be gathered now. On these questions we have dropped some hints already, and may hereafter be more diffuse. We begin with a congregation such as that in Antioch, or that in Ephesus. The apostles and evangelists had converted, baptized, and convened the disciples in those places, had opened to their minds the christian doctrine. In process of time they had so far progressed in this doctrine, as to be able to edify one another; some, as in all societies, progressed faster and farther than others. Some were better qualified to preside, to rule, and to teach, than others; and the constitution of man as an individual, and of men in society, is such as to require, for the sake of intelligence, order, peace, harmony, and general good, that there be persons set apart or appointed to certain functions, which are necessary to the good of the whole associate body. The exigencies of the congregations required this, both with regard to themselves and to others. Thus originated the bishop's office.

The nature of the bishop's office may be learnt either from the exigencies of the congregations, or from the qualifications by which the apostles have designated bishops. The qualifications which the bishop must possess show what was expected from him. These qualifications are of two sorts, such as respect the work to be done by the bishop; and, secondly, such as respect the dignity of character which his prominence in the christian congregation behoves him to possess. The former are those which some call gifts, or talents, of the intellectual order; the latter are endowments purely moral or religious. Those with which we are at present concerned are of the intellectual order. These are comprized under two general heads, viz. teaching and presiding. He must be qualified to teach, and be able by sound teaching both to convince and exhort those who oppose the truth. He must feed the flock of God with all those provisions which their exigencies require, or with which God has furnished them in the christian institution. He must preside well. He is from office

the standing president of the congregation; and it being requisite that he should be one that presides well in his own household, plainly imports what is expected from him in the christian congregation.

In our ordinary meetings, according to the prevailing order in our congregations, we have no need of a president—we only desire and need an orator. Hence we have often been asked, what are we to understand by a bishop's ruling or presiding well? I have generally replied, (perhaps rather satirically,) that the ancient congregations were not so well bred as the modern; that they were apt to ask questions and propose difficulties; and some arose to address their brethren in the way of admonition and exhortation; but that we Americans were a well bred people, had studied the etiquette of gentility in our meetings; and that our bishops needed not the qualifications of a president of a family, tribe, or community, no more than the president of the United States wanted a lifeguard in these peaceful times, or a shepherd a staff to guard his sheep when wolves and dogs were extinct.

In what are called "meetings of business," once a month, or once a quarter, there is some apprehension that a president or "moderator" may be necessary, and the first thing done is to elect or appoint one; never considering or viewing the bishop as any more president from office than any other member, a positive and explicit proof that even the idea of presiding well is not so much as attached to the bishop's office in these times, amongst the Baptists too.

A congregation of disciples, which is modeled upon the New Testament, will find that presiding well, is just as indispensable as teaching well, and that the prohibition of novitiates, or young inexperienced disciples, from the bishop's office, is as wise a provision as any other in the christian institution.

The bishop of a christian congregation will find much to do that never enters into the idea of a modern preacher or "minister." The duties he is to discharge to Christ's flock in the capacity of teacher and president, will engross much of his time and attention. Therefore the idea of remuneration for his services was attached to the office from its first institution. This is indisputably plain, not only from the positive commands delivered to the congregations, but from the hints uttered with a reference to the office itself. Why should it be so much as hinted that the bishops were not to take the oversight of the flock "for the sake of sordid gain," if no emolument or remuneration was attached to the office? The abuses of the principle have led many to oppose even the principle itself. We have said much against the hireling system, and see no ground as yet to refrain; so long as the salvation of the gospel, the conversion of the world, and heaven itself, are articles of traffic, and in the market, like other commodities, accessible to the highest bidder. The motto over the spiritual warehouses is, "The highest bidder shall be the purchaser." And we are persuaded by a hundred venal prints, that if the church had the bank of the United States, that of London, and Paris, it could, in twenty years, convert the whole world, with the exception of a few millions of reprobates. I say while such is the spirit breathed from the pulpit and from the press, there exist ten thousand good reasons for lifting up our voices like a trumpet, crying aloud, and sparing not.

But to discriminate on this subject, and to exhibit where, and when, the hireling system



begins; to graphically define, bound, and limit, beyond the power of cavil, on the one hand, and abuse on the other, has appeared to be a desideratum. While on the subject we shall make one effort here, subject to future and farther amendments, as circumstances may require.

A hireling is one who prepares himself for the office of a "preacher" or "minister," as a mechanic learns a trade, and who obtains a license from a congregation, convention, presbytery, pope, or diocesan bishop, as a preacher or minister, and agrees by the day or sermon, month or year, for a stipulated reward. This definition requires explanation. That such, however, is a hireling, requires little demonstration. He learns the art and mystery of making a sermon, or a prayer, as a man learns the art of making a boot or a shoe. He intends to make his living in whole, or in part, by making sermons and prayers, and he sets himself up to the highest bidder. He agrees for so much a sermon, or for fifty-two in the wholesale way, and for a certain sum he undertakes to furnish so many; but if a better offer is made him when his first contract is out, (and sometimes before it expires,) he will agree to accept a better price. Such a preacher or minister, by all the rules of grammar, logic, and arithmetic, is a hireling in the full sense of the word.

But there are other hirelings not so barefaced as these, who pretend to be inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to become ministers, and who spurn at any other qualification than the impressions and suggestions of the Holy Spirit, who are under an awful wo if they do not preach; and yet agree merely in the capacity of supplies, or preachers, to act the preacher for some small consideration. Upon the whole, I do not think we will err very much in making it a general rule, that every man who receives money for preaching the gospel, or for sermons, by the day, month, or year, is a hireling in the language of truth and soberness—whether he preaches out of his saddlebags, or from the immediate suggestions of the Holy Spirit.

The christian bishop pleads no inward call to the work, and never sets himself to learn it. The hireling does both. The christian bishop is called by the brethren, because he has the qualifications already. The minister says he is inwardly called, and prepares himself to be called and induces others to call him. The former accepts of the office for the congregation of which he is a member, and takes the oversight of them, and receives from them such remuneration as his circumstances require; and as they are bound in duty to contribute to him, not for preaching the gospel at all, for this they have already believed, enjoyed, and professed; but for laboring among them in teaching and watching over them, in admonishing them, in presiding over them, in visiting them in all their afflictions, and in guarding them against seduction, apostacy, and every thing that militates against their growth in knowledge, faith, hope, and love, and retaining their begun confidence unshaken to the end. The latter goes about looking for a flock, and when he finds one that suits his expectations he takes the charge of it for a year or two, until he can suit himself better. The former considers himself the overseer or president of the one congregation only who called him to the office, and that when he leaves them he resigns the office and is no longer president. The latter views himself as a bishop all his life. He was one before he got his present charge, and when he abandons it he is one still. He has

been called by God as Aaron was, and remains a priest for ever. The christian bishop was chosen and ordained from his outward and visible qualifications which the apostles described and required. The "minister" is licensed because of some inward impressions and call which he announces; or because he has been taught Latin, and Greek, and divinity, and because he can make a sermon, speech, or discourse, pleasing to the ears of a congregation or presbytery. Thus they differ in their origin, call, ordination, and work. Money is either the alpha or the omega, or both, in the one system. The grace of God and the edification of the body of Christ, are the alpha and omega of the other. Money makes, induces, and constitutes the one, unites him and his charge, dissolves him and his charge, and reunites him with another; again dissolves the union, and again and again originates a new union. Hence in the hireling system there is a continual tinkling of money, writing of new contracts, giving new obligations, making new subscriptions, reading of new calls, installing of old bishops, and a system of endless dunning. In the other, the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, who gave himself for the church, the eternal ties of christian affection, the superior blessedness of giving to receiving, of supplying our own wants, of laboring with our own hands when it would be oppressive to others, either to relieve us or others, the example of Jesus who made himself poor, are the darling topics and the constant themes. That the bishop who thus labors in the word and teaching is worthy of double honor, and justly entitled to the supply of his wants, whether of food, raiment, or money, or all. Paul himself declares, and reason itself teaches; and those christians deserve not the name, who would suffer such a bishop to be in need of any necessary good thing which they had in their power to bestow. If he wave his right to receive it, he is the more worthy; but the right exists whether he uses or waves it; whether it is or is not recognized by others. So says the christian institution, so says reason, and so say I. But of the bishop's office again.

EDITOR.

No. 10.]

MAY 1, 1826.

I do not wish to occupy many pages of this work with a controversy on a subject which has most generally terminated in metaphysical jargon, and which usually becomes a mere logomachy, or war of words. If the scripture statements, in scripture connexions, and in scripture words, will not prove satisfactory on this subject; and if union, confidence and harmony, cannot be established and retained on such a basis—in vain will recourse be had to speculation, scholastic terms, and philosophical distinctions.

[Ed. C. B.]

*For the Christian Baptist.*

THE communication of Aquila, published in the Christian Baptist of January last, in reference to some things said in the third number of *Christian Union*, demands some attention.

The union of christians it is believed is essential to the glory of God, the happiness of the saints, and the conversion of the world. Jesus Christ is the foundation and the head of this union; and faith in him, according to the scriptural account of his nature and character, is the bond of it. Aquila, I suppose, will agree to these things; and whether he, or the writer of *Christian Union*, be correct or not in their views, it is impossible that they and those who think with them

can realize christian union as long as their ideas of the foundation and head of this union are materially different.

There is in the scriptures one doctrine, in which all the lines of divine revelation meet as in a common centre, and which is therefore, by way of eminence, denominated the truth. That doctrine may be thus briefly stated that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, the Son of God, and Saviour of sinners: that he was delivered for the offences of the guilty, and was raised for their justification, and that in him the Father is well pleased. This is the truth which came by Jesus Christ, (*John i. 17*) to which he himself bare witness, (*John xiv. 6*) which was attested by the voice at his baptism, (*Matt. iii. 17*), and at his transfiguration, (*Luke ix. 35*.) To this truth all the apostles bare witness in their doctrine.—“Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book; but these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through his name.” *John xx. 30, 31*. “Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made that same Jesus whom you have crucified both Lord and Christ.” *Acts ii. 36*. Thus far I suppose there is no difference between Aquila and Christian Union.

Aquila agrees that men must be content with the Scripture statements of the nature and character of Christ; that Christ is really an object of worship, and that he is Divine. But he denies that Christ was worshipped as God, and only as the Son of the only true and living God. He denies also that the apostles and christians for worshipping Christ as God suffered death, or that it was the first cause of their persecution. The only point that is of any importance here is included in the question, What were the views of inspired apostles of the nature and character of Christ as an object of worship? Did they worship him as a man, or as an angel, or as a superangelic creature, or as a demi-god or as the only true and living God? Aquila will answer, that they viewed him as the Son of the only true and living God. I ask, What were their views of his nature and character as the Son of God? Did they view him as a man, or as God, or as neither, as do the Arians? Or did they view him as God and man? Whatever were the views of the apostles on this subject, it will be readily conceded they are essential to true christianity, and to the union of christians in truth and love. And it will be also agreed that the apostles in worshipping Christ had the same views of him which they have written in the New Testament. These things being premised, I observe, that the apostles did denominate Christ God, and ascribed to him the attributes of Jehovah. Paul tells us that as concerning the flesh, Christ came from the fathers, who is over all God blessed forever. *Rom. ix. 5*. This is a scripture statement, agreeably to which Paul, an inspired apostle, must have worshipped Christ; he worshipped him as God blessed forever, and so ought we.

But he is not only called or denominated God, but the perfections of God, such as creative power, omnipotence, omniscience, divine worship, divine honors, and eternal existence are ascribed to him in scripture statements. He is also described as a real man and is so denominated, yet without sin; he by the power of the Holy Ghost was conceived by the Virgin Mary, was born, increased in wisdom, grew in stature and in favor with God and man; he ate, drank,

slept, labored; was fatigued, hungered, thirsted; rejoiced and sympathized with his brethren; wept and was in an agony; prayed, bled, died, and was buried, and rose again.

The ascriptions of divinity to him are sustained by divine words, as the ascriptions of human nature to him are sustained by human actions and sufferings.

Those who object to Christ being God as well as man, do it because they cannot understand the *modus* of the connexion between Deity and humanity—how a union of the divine and human natures could take place; and yet they believe, at least some of them do, that a human body was united to a soul not human. They have never yet told us to what order or class of beings this new compound belongs. According to their views he is not divine, only in the same way, but in a higher degree than the apostles were; he is not human, for a human soul is essential to human nature; nor is he angelic, for angels have no corporeal powers.

If Christ possesses not only the nature according to the flesh, that is human nature, which he derived from the fathers, but is also God blessed forever, Aquila will surely agree that “the worship of him always supposes and includes his godhead, in which the eternal, original, and essential dignity of his person consists.” Again—the inspired evangelist John has told us that the Word was God and was made flesh, who is the same that Paul spoke of as above. Aquila, by reason of his not being able to comprehend, or even to understand the manner of the conception, or the mode of the union between the Deity and humanity of Christ, ought not to regard it as “a soul-revolting and a heart-chilling idea,” for great is the mystery, God was manifested in the flesh. Instead of this being a heart-chilling and a soul-revolting idea, it is the delight and joy of the saints. It is also essential to christian union and to true christianity, according to apostolic views of it.

Every thing said of Christ in respect to his human nature, must necessarily be spoken of him in a capacity in which he is inferior to the Father. But it may be asked, How are we to distinguish between Christ’s human and his divine nature? I answer, Just as when we speak of a man we distinguish whether what is said is said of his body or of his soul. When we say that Abraham is dead, we mean his mortal part. When we say that Abraham is alive, we mean his immortal part. When the Evangelist says that Jesus increased in stature and wisdom, and in favor with God and man; that he ate, drank, slept, wept, &c. he obviously means that his human nature did this, comprehending his body and soul. When he affirms that the Word was God, and made the universe; and when the apostle Paul says that Christ is supreme, God blessed forever, these are predicated of his divinity which can neither increase in stature or in wisdom.

Christian union is vitally concerned in unity of view and sentiment in relation to the nature and character of Christ. There can be no union in worship without this, as there cannot be in faith and love, for he is the Alpha and the Omega of both. Arians, who deny the Deity of Jesus Christ, do actually charge those who believe in it and worship him as such, with idolatry. How would those who entertain such discordant views commune with each other—realize a joint participation of the same blessings? those things which are soul-revolting and heart-chilling to one, are soul-attracting and heart-cheering to another.



I have written with much frankness, and perhaps the things I have written may be considered as savoring too much of the language of Ashdod. Be it so. I cannot understand the use of facts, natural and supernatural, and of correspondent words and sentences as means of information, if they be not intended for, and used to impart ideas and knowledge of existences, natures, qualities, and characters, in relation to the objects and subjects to which they belong and apply.

In nature natural phenomena or appearances indicate and prove natural existences and properties, and form the bounding circle of all that can be known of nature. Supernatural phenomena, miracles, or divine works as distinguished from the operations of nature, properly so called, indicate and prove supernatural or divine existences, when associated with verbal explanation and used by the agents for that purpose. These, comprehending the phenomena and language, form the bounding circle of all that can be known of spiritual existences exclusive of the knowledge of the human mind, if indeed that can be termed spiritual knowledge, which may be known of the mind without revelation.

It may be objected that the number of places in the New Testament in which Christ is called God, are so few that they ought not to be relied on in fixing so important an article of faith as his Deity. To which I reply, that it is no more necessary that the fact should be stated in every chapter in the New Testament that Jesus Christ is God, in order that it should be known and believed as an essential article of christian faith and of christian union, than it is necessary that we be informed in every chapter of the bible that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, that it should be known and believed; or that a law of the state shall be reenacted every day by the legislature, to make it obligatory on the people of the state.

In casting my eyes over Aquila's publication, I was sensibly impressed with the truth of some of the remarks made in the third number of Christian Union, and which apply in a considerable degree, although not in the same way or in relation to the same subject, to all sectary christian associations, so far as their peculiarities are concerned. With the quotation of it I will conclude this paper.

"These disputes have originated a technical phraseology on both sides, (the Arian and Athanasian,) which has greatly narrowed the vocabulary of religion, and has rendered some modes of expression almost obsolete, which were indulged in without scruple by the sacred writers. They have occasioned, on the Arian side of the question, in many instances, the relinquishment of the latitude with which the scriptures express themselves on the nature and glory of Christ, and have produced a scrupulous and systematic cast of diction, which is altogether inconsistent with the freedom displayed by the inspired penmen. Many expressions are employed without hesitation in scripture, which are rarely found even in the direct form of quotation in their writings, and are never heard in their public addresses, but with a view of subjecting them to explanations and criticisms, which so mar and mutilate the nature and character of Christ as to render him altogether an unfit object for the worship of christians; and who, if he had been thus seen by Stephen, and Paul, and apostolic christians, had not been worshipped by them."

PHILO-CHRISTIAN UNION.

We have always designed and endeavored that this work should not present a one-sided representation of things, of sentiments, and practices of the time in which we live. We have nothing to lose in the pursuit of truth; and we never desired that our own views should ever obtain any other authority over the minds of our brethren, than as they are authorized and supported by the apostles and prophets. We have therefore given publicity to all the objections, candid or uncandid, which have been respectfully submitted by our brethren or opponents. We wish to give our readers every opportunity of judging correctly of every thing we advocate, and have therefore given much more of the objections offered by our correspondents, than of the commendations and encomiums which have been received. The FOLLOWING LETTER speaks for itself, and demonstrates that its author possesses talents of the first order. I publish this letter *literatim et punctuatim*; but had I taken any liberty with it, there are two or three words and phrases which I would, for his sake, have erased. I need not add that my giving publicity to this document affords some evidence that I am willing to meet any objections which can be made to my views or to my course.

EDITOR.

Saturday Morning, February 11th, 1826.

MR. EDITOR,—My own consciousness approves the goodness of the injunction, "Judge not," and intimates the folly of expecting "perfection" in any man living: but we expect "consistency," especially in a *reformer*, and a *restorer of the primitive order* of things in the church of Christ. Suffer me to call your attention to a few things which demand, on your part, a public elucidation. In your reply to T. T. of Boone county, Missouri, you say "I and the church with which I am connected, are in full communion with the Mahoning Baptist Association, Ohio; and through them, with the whole Baptist society in the United States; and I do intend to continue in connexion with this people," &c. Now, sir, I have no doubt but you feel honestly about this "full communion" with the whole Baptist society, but in fact and in effect, it is but a *white lie*; an equivocal, a time-serving expedient and tends to shake the confidence of those who love you, as to the downright sincerity of the Christian Baptist. It has, at least, disturbed me not a little. Pray sir, what is "full communion?" Is it not "full union in the common worship, doctrine and institutions of any church or denomination." Yes, this is the understanding where the language comes from the lip, or pen of integrity. Your profession implies, according to your own principles, a sincere conviction that the whole Baptist society (regular associated Baptists) is the church of Christ, of which Jesus is the head, and that they are conformed to the New Testament law as respects doctrine, worship, and order. You, by this, publicly avow that in your judgment, the regular associated Baptists exhibit the model of Christ's house, are the election of grace, and may be pointed out as the living epistle of the Holy Ghost to be seen and read of all men. This is not what the Christian Baptist says, but it is what your visible standing and professing conduct says. If so, in what sense are you a restorer of primitive christianity? If they, as a society, are the church of Christ, what right have you to interfere with their existing order and state? But if, at heart, you do not confess them as holding that order, which would

rejoice the soul of an apostle, what do you mean by professing "full communion" with them?

Pray sir, who or what are the associated Baptists in the United States? Are they not a large denomination of religionists, differing from the other religious sects in no respect, affecting this question? After you have approved their *dipping*, and reprobated the *sprinkling* of the others, in what other particular are the associated Baptists a peculiar people, unless it be that after having made one right movement, their conformity to the "course of the (christian) world" is more sinful as it is more inconsistent and glaring? This may be contradicted, but cannot be disproved from God's word; and he who has "full communion" with the whole Baptist society, as the New Testament church, and yet refuses to extend the right hand of fellowship to the rest of the evangelical sects, is a purblind pharisee, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel.

Dialogue between "Regular Baptist" and the "Editor," who are professedly of *one* faith, of *one* mind, of *one* church, speaking the *same* things, and of *one* heart to serve the King of Zion, as he has commanded, &c.

*Reg. B.* Our churches are founded on the Philadelphia Confession, as the bond of union, and the statute of discipline; is not that proper and scriptural?

*Ed.* By no means; it is antichristian and must be considered rebellion against the Great King and Head of the Church!

*Reg. B.* It prevents varieties in doctrine, which could not be tolerated among us as particular Baptists, and sound Calvinists. Is not Calvinism according to the scriptures? I mean the limited supra-sub-lapsarian plan?

*Ed.* I think not. Calvinism is a corruption of christianity, and of course a curse to the world, by perverting men from the simplicity of the faith!

*Reg. B.* Indeed! but Mr. Editor, what think you; ought the Lord's Supper to be attended oftener than once a month, or is it a matter left to the churches to fix, as suits their views? You know the scriptures say "as oft," without telling how oft, and the Associated Baptists throughout the union consider it a matter of indifference until determined by a vote of the church. They generally commune once a month, or at least once in three months, in the country churches. Is not our order scriptural?

*Ed.* Unquestionably it is not. The church of Christ must break bread every first day; nay, it is the main design of their coming together. Monthly communion is a vile deviation from gospel order!

*Reg. B.* At any rate the Associated Baptists are right in casting out of the Associations any church that has more than one Bishop or Elder. It has been lately done; was that not strictly scriptural?

*Ed.* No! The primitive churches had each a plurality of elders or bishops, and without at least two bishops was not fully organized. They grew up in the church and were never imported. Know sir, that in each church there was a presbytery! Examine and you will be satisfied of this too.

*Reg. B.* Well, well, Mr. Editor, though we don't agree in most things, yet we are one as respects the glorious duty of going down into the water and coming up out of the water. We both despise babyrantomism, do we not?

*Ed.* Even here, you are blind and uneducated. You are dipped for no better reason than

binds you to any other duty, such as speaking the truth, or paying a debt. Learn sir, that the baptismal water washes away sin, and is the only divinely appointed pledge that the blood of Christ has cleansed the conscience of the obedient disciple. Why do you stare so? Go home and read your bible and you will see that your regular, particular, Calvinistic, Associated Churches are of the world, and their services an abomination, for it is written "In vain do you worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men!"

*Reg. B.* O dear sir! I was mistaken in you—Pray Mr. Editor are you a Regular Baptist?

*Ed.* Why yes I am and I intend to be in "full communion" with the whole Baptist society in the United States. Though I agree with you in almost nothing, yet by keeping up this nominal fellowship, I can be more extensively useful! I confess that this plea is preferred by almost all the Evangelical in their respective communions, as a reason for infant sprinkling, episcopacy, but what then?

*Reg. B.* O nothing! As our brother Doctor says, utility is the standard of virtue, and conscience is the creature of circumstances. Besides you will, Mr. Editor, be better protected by the Association at your back, than if you only relied on Christ's promises. It is at least a good thing to "lay heavy burthens on the shoulders of other men, though we do not touch them ourselves with one of our fingers."

*Ed.* Well, let us say no more on this head. Good by my brother!

Dear sir, I have used plainness of speech—print this, and speak in your own behalf—If Associations are scriptural, why then, say so—If not, then "Come out from among them"—If you are acting a part from pride, love of popularity or singularity, be assured that in their train comes contempt. These things have I written, hoping you are desirous of consistency—a man of integrity and uprightness, and from a desire to make you more and more amiable, that I may love you more for the truth's sake.

AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST.

#### To an Independent Baptist.

DEAR SIR,—AFTER thanking you for your fidelity, and great plainness of speech, and for the favorable opportunity you have afforded me for vindicating my course from imputations, which many may make, when, and where, I should never hear them; and also for the occasion which you have given for illustrating more fully a principle which I think is not yet well understood by many intelligent christians, I proceed to observe that your very ingenious dialogue, and, indeed, your objections altogether, proceed upon the hypothesis, and terminate in one point, viz. that my course, or rather my declaration that "I and the church with which I am connected are in full communion with the Mahoning Baptist Association, and through them with the whole Baptist society," &c. is inconsistent with the sentiments and views exhibited in the "Christian Baptist." If so, your dialogue and letter are unanswerable; I must lay my hand upon my mouth: if not, your shafts have missed the mark, and carry no conviction to my mind; and cannot to any intelligent reader.

I agree with you that consistency, though a very rare commodity, is essential to a good character, and especially in any person who would call the attention of men to the bible. It is a



misfortune, however, to see men always consistently doing wrong. Consistency is a virtue only when the professed principles of action are good. In every other case it is very far from being commendable. Perhaps Satan is a very consistent character since the seduction of Eve. Neither sincerity nor consistency are virtues abstract from the qualities which constitute a good man. But without them no man can claim any regard from his fellow-men, nor can his conduct or example be worthy of imitation, whatever other good qualities he may possess. I consider, therefore, that the charge of inconsistency, when the professed principles of action are good and sacred, is no trivial imputation.

But what constitutes consistency? In acting conformably to our own professed sentiments and principles, or in acting conformably to the professed sentiments and principles of others. In answering this question, your letter is answered. I have no doubt of being able to make it quite obvious that this obnoxious sentence is perfectly consistent with the views and principles exhibited and advocated in this work. But if consistency requires a person to act conformably to the views of "An Independent Baptist," (a proud and imposing name) or to the views of any other person differing from his own, in that case you are unanswerable; but if not, a pigmy is an overmatch for a giant panoplied with dialogues.

To come to the point at once, what are the principles of union and communion advocated in this work? Has not the one foundation which the apostle affirmed was already laid, and besides which no other can be laid, which will stand the test of time and of critics, which is the only one on which all christians can unite, and have "full communion," and against which the gates of Hades shall not prevail; I say has not this been the only bond of union which the "Christian Baptist" ever advocated? And what is it, but a sincere and hearty conviction, expressed or confessed by the lips, that Jesus is the Christ: and this belief, exhibited by an overt act of obedience which implies that the subject has put on Christ, prepares him, or qualifies him, if you please, to be saluted as a brother. So long as he confesses with his lips that he believes in his heart this truth, and lives conformably to it and supports an unblemished moral character, so long he is a worthy brother.

Your dialogue artfully keeps out of view every thing about the one Lord, the one faith, the one hope, and hardly will admit the one baptism, and every other point of general agreement in the Baptist society, and to the best advantage exhibits the points of difference. Now a person equally ingenious with yourself could frame a dialogue on the other side, showing how inconsistent I would be, with the principles asserted in this work, if I had refused communion with the whole Baptist society. Did I say as ingenious as yourself? Nay, with the ingenuity of a stripling, he might confound me. On the hypothesis that I refused or declined union or communion with the Baptist society, he would introduce an artificial, regular, or associate Baptist, who would ask me, Do not the associate and unassociate Baptists believe that Jesus is the Christ? Nay, do they not believe that he died for our sins, that he was buried, that he rose the third day, that he ascended into heaven, that he sent down the Holy Spirit to advocate his cause, to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that he will come again to raise the dead, and to judge the world. Nay, do they not declare their belief that his kingdom is

not of this world. That the subjects of it are born again, new creatures; and must maintain good works, and cultivate holiness; without which no man shall see the Lord? To all such queries I would be constrained to answer yes.

He would next say, Do you not contend that unity of opinion is not essential to christian union; that the one Lord, the one faith, the one hope, and the one baptism, comprehend all that can legitimately be required? To this I must consistently answer yes. Well, then, says he, you are a hypocrite, a pharisee, insincere, and most inconsistent, and a transgressor, building the things which you have demolished. To which I must consistently plead guilty.

You see, then, how little ingenuity would be requisite to confound and silence me, should I act the part of an "Independent Baptist" while contending for the principles exhibited in this work. The inconsistency of which you complain is therefore not in me, but it is in your own views.

I am yet but entering upon the subject. I shall now give my own explanation of this offensive "full communion" with the Baptist society. Your full communion and my full communion are very different things. You define your full communion to be "full union in the common worship, doctrine, and institutions of any church or denomination." Again you say, "Your profession implies, according to your own principles, a sincere conviction that the whole Baptist society (regular associated Baptists) is the church of Christ, of which Jesus is the head, and that they are conformed to the new testament law, as respects doctrine, worship, and order, exhibiting the model of Christ's house," &c. I question very much whether you yourself have this sort of full communion with the one congregation with which you associate. But this will not excuse me. Again, I question very much whether Paul the apostle could have broken bread with the congregation in Rome, in Corinth, in Thessalonica, or with the congregations in Galatia, and others, at the time he wrote his letters to them. Nay, I do not think that the Saviour himself could have instituted the supper amongst the twelve, or that they could have had full communion on your principles in that one institution the night in which he was betrayed. For none of these congregations at the times alluded to were exhibiting the model of Christ's house, "were conformed to the new testament, as respects doctrine, worship, and order," or had this sincere conviction that all was perfect—just up to the standard of full perfection in all these particulars.

In the full import of the words full communion, when carried to their utmost extent, I do not know that such a communion ever was, or ever will be exhibited upon earth. The word full, I admit, may be so explained as to confine this sort of communion to the heavenly state. But in ordinary acceptance, or in its loose acceptance, it means no more than joint participation in a certain act or acts. When I unite in prayer with a society of disciples, I have full communion with them in certain petitions, confessions, and thanksgivings; but requests may be presented, confessions made, and thanksgivings offered, in which I have not full communion. The same may be said of any other social act of worship. All that I intend by the phrase is,\* that I will unite with any Baptist society in the Uni-

\* The words full communion are marked with inverted commas, in my letter to T. T. Missouri, thereby implying that I use them in accommodation to their current use.

ted States, in any act of social worship; such as prayer, praise, or breaking bread in commemoration of the Lord's death, if they confess the one Lord, the one faith, the one hope, and the one baptism: provided always, that, as far as I can judge, they piously and morally conform to their profession. But that congregations may be found, under the banners of this profession, with whom I would not unite in one single act of social worship, as well as individuals, I will cheerfully declare. And with not one would I unite in prayer or praise, or breaking bread, if that act is to be interpreted into a full, perfect, and entire approbation of all their views, doctrine, and practice, as a society or individuals. Here then is the fundamental difference between your full communion and mine. Every act of the one, you understand, as unequivocally expressing full and entire approbation of every thing among them. I consider every act as only expressing approbation of the thing represented, and of them in so far as they conform to it. Therefore, I frankly and boldly declare to them, as Paul did to the Corinthians, the things in which I praise them, and the things in which I praise them not. And I know of no way, of no course, that any christian can pursue consistently with the whole new testament, consistently with his serving God and his own generation, but this one. Therefore I advocate it and practise it.

I have tried the pharisaic plan, and the monastic. I was once so straight, that, like the Indian's tree, I leaned a little the other way. And however much I may be slandered now as seeking "popularity" or a popular course, I have to rejoice that to my own satisfaction, as well as to others, I proved that truth, and not popularity, was my object; for I was once so strict a Separatist that I would neither pray nor sing praises with any one who was not as perfect as I supposed myself. In this most unpopular course I persisted until I discovered the mistake, and saw that on the principle embraced in my conduct, there never could be a congregation or church upon the earth.

As to "the purblind Pharisee who strains out a gnat and swallows a camel," because he will not have full communion with all the evangelical sects in the mass, I have to remark, that it is not optional with me or you whether we would have christian communion with them. They have something to say upon that subject; and here, once for all, it must be noted, that my having communion with any society, Baptist or Paido-Baptist, depends just as much upon them as upon myself. Some Baptist congregations would not receive me into their communion, and if any Paido-Baptist society would, it is time enough to show that I am inconsistent with my own principles when any "evangelical sect or congregation" shall have welcomed me to their communion, and I have refused it. At the same time, I frankly own, that my full conviction is, that there are many Paido-Baptist congregations, of whose christianity, or of whose profession of christianity, I think as highly, as of most Baptist congregations, and with whom I could wish to be on the very same terms of christian communion on which I stand with the whole Baptist society.

There is, I confess, a great inconsistency somewhere; yes, every where, on the subject of communion. Baptists, and Paido-Baptists generally confine communion to the Lord's table, and, indeed, call it, by way of distinction, *the communion*. Hence full communion, with the majority, means no more than the *breaking of*

*bread together*, or sitting down at the same "communion table." Here originates all error on the subject of your dialogue, and on the whole subject of intercommunity with the christian world. Another proof, too, that conscience is a creature of circumstances.

There is a certain place called "The Family Altar." Baptists and Paido-Baptists, of different name, often meet at this "family altar," and there unite all in one communion. In their monthly concerts for prayer, &c. there is another "altar," at which all sects sometimes meet; and all have full communion in prayer and praise. But if on the next day the Lord's table was furnished, they would rather be caught in company with publicans and sinners, than sit at the side of those with whom they had full communion in prayer and praise a few hours before. Their consciences would shudder at the idea of breaking bread in full communion with those, with whom, yesterday, or last night, they had full communion in adoring, venerating, invoking, and praising the same God and Redeemer. There is something like inconsistency here. It must be confessed, too, that the New Testament presents baptism as prior to social prayer and praise, as indispensably preceding these, as the Lord's supper. I have thought, and thought, and vascillated very much, on the question, Whether Baptists and Paido-Baptists ought, could, would, or should, irrespective of their peculiarities, sit down at the same Lord's table. And one thing I do know, that either they should cease to have communion in prayer, praise, and other religious observances, or they should go the whole length. Of this point I am certain. And I do know that as much can be said, and with as much reason and scripture on its side, to prove that immersion is as necessarily prior to social prayer, praise, &c. as it is to eating the Lord's supper.

Dear sir, this plan of making our own nest, and fluttering over our own brood; of building our own tent, and of confining all goodness and grace to our noble selves and the "elect few" who are like us, is the quintessence of sublimated pharisaism. The old Pharisees were but babes in comparison to the modern: and the longer I live, and the more I reflect upon God and man—heaven and earth—the bible and the world—the Redeemer and his church—the more I am assured that all sectarianism is the offspring of hell; and that all differences about words, and names, and opinions, hatched in Egypt, or Rome, or Edinburgh, are like the frolics of drunken men; and that where there is a *new creature*, or a society of them, with all their imperfections, and frailties, and errors in sentiment, in views, and opinions, they ought to receive one another, and the strong to support the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. To lock ourselves up in the bandbox of our own little circle; to associate with a few units, tens, or hundreds, as the pure church, as the elect, is real Protestant monkery, it is evangelical pharisaism.

If we would heal the sick, we must visit them; if we would restore the lame, we must take them by the hand; if we would correct, inform, or reform erring christians, we must do as the Saviour did;—bear with their weaknesses. We must seek every opportunity of converting the sinner from the error of his way, of instructing the weak and feeble-minded. It is lame charity which requires all its objects to be as rich, as wise, and as strong as ourselves. And the history of the world does not afford one instance



of any man, or set of men, reforming, or restoring, or enlightening, or comforting the society from which they separated. And the systems and sects which they built, in the lapse of a few years, were as much in need of reformation, as those from which their founders separated.

The Baptist society exhibits a greater variety than any other society in christendom. They are a people made up of all religious persuasions, and, generally speaking, their platform is more consonant to the freedom of inquiry, to freedom from ecclesiastical tyranny, and to the independence of congregations, than any other. With the exception of some rigid "regulars," confessions of faith and the authority of associations, are held in no great esteem. The congregations in most places are extremely jealous of their rights, and delegate nothing to any superior judicatory. I know some associations whose meetings are as innocent as a tea party, or any social or friendly interview. Some, I know, do imitate the *beast*, only they want horns. They resemble a hornless ox; they push with their heads, but cannot gore. But so long as they will bear reproof, suffer exhortation, and allow us to declare our sentiments without restraint; so long as they manifest a willingness to know the whole truth, and any disposition to obey it; so long as they will hear us and cordially have fellowship with us, we will have fellowship with them, we will thus labor for their good, and endeavor to correct what appears to be amiss—commending when praise is due, and censuring when it becomes necessary. I do hope in this way always to have the approbation of Him whose commendation is more to be desired than the admiration and praise of ten thousand worlds. This, I think, you must see, I do in perfect consistency with the sentiments advocated in this work. But if you still think otherwise, I am willing to hear from you again, and pay due regard to what you have to advance.

With best wishes, I remain, &c.

EDITOR.

#### *The Baptist Recorder.*

WE have duly received seven numbers of *The Baptist Recorder*, edited by Messrs. George Waller and Spencer Clack, Ky. Sundry articles in these numbers exhibit a belligerent aspect towards this paper. The anonymous pieces over the signatures S. M.—S. W.—and P. D. we pass without a single criticism, for two reasons. First, because when a writer opposes a person who is known, and disliking to be known himself, conceals himself behind two letters as a mask, there is something so suspicious in his character, so undeserving of notice, except from a person like himself under a mask, that we cannot deign him a reply. We appear unmasked. Those who expect from us any attention must come forward in their full name. And in the second place there is no reason, argument, or good sense in those pieces, that should induce us either to desire to know their authors, or, if known, to require a moment's reflection. If the authors make themselves known, I will publish some of their pieces in this work without a single remark, believing that their very appearance in this work would be a sufficient exposure of their imbecility, or of that of their cause, if they have any.

I feel myself in duty bound to pay some attention to the editorial department of this work, or to what the editors themselves have to say on the great things of the kingdom of Jesus in the present and future state. I am, indeed, much

pleased to see them come forward to oppose what they do not like, and to correct what they think wrong. I do assure them that it will give me great pleasure to be corrected by them in any respect whatever. I trust I have not yet to learn the value of truth. Like gold, every particle of it is precious. I do earnestly desire to be in the full possession of as much of it as I can by any means acquire, and I am always thankful to every man, woman, or child who imparts to me the knowledge of what I knew not before. Besides, I am much pleased with their efforts on another account. The Christian Baptist is extensively read in Kentucky, and if it is doing any injury it will be corrected and repressed in its career; and if it is doing any good it will receive a new impulse and be accelerated in its course. I care not for its circulation on any other account, than as it does good. If it does evil, the sooner it dies I will rejoice. But I must be convinced before I can be converted to any thing. And such is the constitution of my mind, that nothing will operate upon it but truth, reason, argument and evidence.

There are, in the numbers which have been issued, but two topics that demand our attention. The one is the editorial remarks upon "experimental religion;" the other is some remarks of Mr. George Waller upon his "casting vote in the Long Run Association." Had Mr. Waller confined his remarks to the subject on which he professedly wrote, we should have endeavored to have found room for his whole piece; but he has indulged in too much acrimony, and gone off in a tangent from his subject to insinuations which are neither creditable to himself nor his cause. We shall, however, present the reader with what pertains to his casting vote:—

"Finding in the last number of the work alluded to, [*Christian Baptist*,] page 215, under the head of "the Casting Vote, or the Creed triumphant over the Bible," a few remarks, in which I (with the Long Run Association) am implicated as acting an unworthy part, and considering myself in that connexion singled out as an object of slander, it seems altogether important that I pay some attention to that subject. It is true, as stated in said number, that the Long Run Association, at her session of September, 1825, reported three thousand and sixty-four members; that I did preside in said meeting as Moderator; that a circular letter, written by P. S. Fall, pastor of the Baptist church in Louisville, Ky. was presented for inspection, the subject of which was as stated in said number. It is also true that I am a descendant of the Wallers of Virginia; once persecuted by those who, having the form of godliness, but denying the power of it: and so great is my attachment to my predecessors, and that gospel which they so warmly espoused, that I am content (if the will of God be so) to suffer persecution from a similar source. It is not true, as expressed at the head of said remarks, that in the rejection of said letter, the creed was triumphant over the Bible. Nor is it true that in giving the casting vote in that case, I copied the example of Doctor Lightfoot by acting from the same reasons. I must acknowledge myself at some loss to understand the allusion in the expression, "for the same reasons:" if reference is had in this expression to the reason given by the publishers of said circular letter, for the decision of the moderator. Although I have no disposition to impeach the motives or veracity of the publishers, yet, to say the least of it, manifest injustice is done to the moderator on the subject of his vote. It is ad-

mitted that something to that effect may have occurred in the course of examination on that subject, but not in the shape of a reason for the casting vote. It is not true, as insinuated by the Christian Baptist, that the creed and the Bible were in question before the Association; and I cannot persuade myself that Mr. Campbell believes they were; for he knows too well the views of the Baptists in the adoption of the creed, to be innocent when he thus represents them; for support of these remarks, see Confession, ch. i. of which Mr. C. cannot be supposed to be ignorant, especially as he has so much to say against them. It will be recollected by those who were attentive to the proceedings of the Long Run Association, that after the circular written by P. S. Fall, had passed the examination of the committee, and it was presented to the Association for adoption, there were two additional notes, one of which declaring that it was not the intention of the writer to call in question the propriety of creeds: this was done at the suggestion of the moderator, in committee, and with a design to waive any objection to the letter, before the Association, which might arise from the supposition that the letter was designed to oppose and put down the creed. Not having the manuscript (as it appeared after amendments) before me, I do not pretend to detail the facts precisely as they occurred; but the substance is given, to the best of my recollection. These things in view, and it is impossible that any person can believe, either that the creed or Bible were in question before the Association, or that the casting vote of the moderator rendered the creed triumphant over the Bible."

Now let the reader observe that every thing stated in the article alluded to in the seventh number is admitted by Mr. Waller, excepting the head or title prefixed to the article. That the creed was triumphant over the bible was the natural consequence in my mind, for this reason: First, because the letter advocated neither more nor less than that the bible is "the one only sufficient, perfect, and infallible rule of christian faith and manners." And Mr. Waller admits that the extracts given in the seventh number do, in truth, express the substance of the whole letter. Has Mr. Waller assigned any other reason for giving his casting vote, other than stated by the publishers of said letter? Does he now give his reasons for said vote? And what damnable or condemnable doctrine was in said letter, except that it contended that the bible alone was the only sufficient, perfect, and infallible rule of christian faith and manners? Was not the substance of the letter the reason why he rejected it by the casting vote? If not, pray what was it? And if it was the substance, I must again declare, notwithstanding the question was not put in the very words whether the creed or the bible shall be the only perfect and infallible rule, &c. that still it was in fact and in effect, "the creed triumphant over the bible;" and to quibble now about the form in which the question was put, or to make that an excuse for the vote, is only weak and childish. Will the reader please turn over to the seventh number of this volume and read the extracts of said letter there given, and remember that Mr. Waller has affirmed them to be correctly stated, and then ask himself whether the title given to the casting vote is just or unjust, and I will abide by his decision.

As to what he says about copying the example of Dr. Lightfoot, I did not say he "copied" it. And his saying that he was not actuated by Dr. Lightfoot's reasons, and then declaring that he

did not know what they were, I must charitably say, deserves no notice. I am glad to observe that he is now ashamed of his vote, and that he considers it "slander" to be reminded of it, or to have it published without a disrespectful word. I have only to add my earnest desires that all who vote as he did against such a document as said letter, may consider it "slander" to be told of it again.

I will give another extract immediately following the preceding, which I am sorry to say is but a poor defence of himself, and unworthy of a good cause. This I consider undeserved slander, and of the lowest kind:—

"I take this to be the whole secret: Mr. C. has set out to cut a figure in the learned world, and no plan so likely to succeed as to set himself to oppose the whole religious world. If this course can be freed from the charge of bigotry, (against which he inveighs so vehemently,) I can only say that I am mistaken: this, however, is no new thing under the sun, for in every instance where new sects start up, their leaders must (in order to success) show that every body else is wrong as to religious matters, and themselves right: it is true, the baptists are complimented, not only with assertions that they are right on the subject of baptism, but to their support on that subject one public controversy after another has been bestowed upon them. This, however, is not surprising, when it seems a reasonable calculation, that by means of a press at hand, publications of those controversies might be productive of a considerable income to the donor. The exertions of Mr. C. in opposition to associations and confessions of faith, or opinions, cannot be accounted for upon principles satisfactory to me, in any other way than by admitting the following as the cause. That in order to enlarge the sphere of his operations every thing like dependence of the churches, one upon another, must be destroyed by the destruction of associations, and that of the members of churches by the destruction of confessions of faith. And why must associations and creeds be destroyed? Because they are human productions. No person pretends that there is express precept or example in the word of God, yet I esteem it impious that the scripturality of associations or creeds should be denied."

Here my motives of action are represented as vile, and what I have said must be false, because my motives are judged, condemned, and execrated. I had thought that "God alone searched the hearts and tried the thoughts of the children of men." On this I will make no comment. I do not impute any thing to the motives of Mr. Waller; I trust they are pure and upright, and I assure him I will be the last to impeach them. It is with what he says and does I have to do. I leave the rest to him "that sees not as man sees."

I have not room to be more particular in my remarks, nor more full in my extracts on this subject. There are some sentiments expressed on the subject of creeds and associations which I cannot believe are the real sentiments of the author. He says, "I esteem it impious that the scripturality of associations or creeds should be denied." I will not comment upon this saying until the writer avows it to be his real sentiment on this subject, believing it to have been written at an unfavorable moment when under the influence of some mental perturbation. For assuredly no Baptist can think that it is a sin against God, or the want of reverence for him, to deny that human creeds and associations are commanded in scripture.



Again he says, "To say that creeds and associations were introduced among us, with any other than religious feelings, desires, and motives, is unpardonable impiety." Now I would rather think and say that Mr. Waller did not understand or weigh the import of his own words, than to think he really means that the mere saying that creeds and associations were introduced not as he represents, is a sin against God that has no forgiveness, neither in this world nor the next. There are so many things of this kind in brother Waller's piece, that I would rather impute them to any cause than to suppose them the genuine views and feelings of his mind. His remarks upon the new version of the New Testament, which he never saw, are of the same kind, and indicate some mental perturbation, which forbid my commenting upon them until I am assured that they are his cool and deliberate sentiments.

On the subject of "experimental religion" the editors have been hinting, hoping, and doubting something about my orthodoxy. I am glad they have begun here, and that they have published my first essay on this subject. Had they also been so obliging as to have published my last one, or even an intermediate one on the same topic, I should have appreciated their candor and liberality still more. I think my remarks on *Conscience*, vol. 3, No. 7, being the last thing said on that subject, ought to appear in connexion with No. 8, vol. 1. I shall feel obliged to acknowledge a favor done to myself individually, and to the cause which I espouse, should the editors publish the article on "*Conscience*," No. 7, vol. 3.

While on this topic, I must just remark, that as the editors have not as yet attempted to elucidate this subject, or to give their views, or any views, other than a few vague expressions, it would no doubt be of importance to the community that they should fully discuss the subject. And still I put the question, What is "experimental religion?" The words import neither more nor less in any acceptation of them, according to the English language than a religion founded upon experiment, or proved by experiment. It is optional with those who contend for the thing signified by the phrase, to say which of the two. If it mean a religion *founded* upon experiment, let them illustrate the nature and properties of those experiments: if *proved* by experiment, let the experiments be explained. I will not do it for them, because I cannot. Let them who so warmly contend for the name and for something under the name, explain it, and I will examine and declare unequivocally my views upon their exposition. As to "christian experience," the language is intelligible, and I understand the words precisely. They mean *the experience of a christian*. And I am persuaded that every christian in the world has experience. Yet a great portion of what is commonly called "christian experience" is as much the experience of deists and apostates, as it is of christians. Neither convictions of guilt, nor fears of punishment, nor hopes of exemption, nor desires for reformation, are peculiar to christians. Simon Magus, and Judas Iscariot, and ten thousand others have experienced these, whom few of the populars would put on their lists of christians. If the phrase "christian experience" must be retained, let it be defined; let those who consecrate it give us a definition of it that comports with the import of the words or with their views. My remarks in the 8th No. vol. 1, on this subject, may be ridiculed and laughed at by those who

do not understand them, or by those who have been misled and are misleading others in this wild course; but they have not yet been able to show that they are either logically or scripturally erroneous. I have too many documents to prove that thousands are depending upon their experiences and experimental religion as the bases of their hope towards God, whose experience and experimental religion are not worth a straw.

I am assured that every one that is born of God feels as well as believes, hopes and fears, loves and abhors, rejoices and trembles, and that they are conscious of all these; that they are purified in their hearts, reformed in their lives, and zealous of good works; that they are fervent in spirit, constant in prayer, and intent on showing forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. And I contend that, without these, a man is blind and cannot see far, and dead while he lives.

As to the *modus operandi*, as described by the populars, it is all foolish philosophy; vain and deceitful jargon, and a ship load of such theories is not worth one inspired word. If I cannot prove them such by unanswerable arguments, I will become a spiritual metaphysician, a theoretic doctor, a retailer of theological receipts, as orthodox as Beza or Calvin.

I have now to propose to the editors of the Baptist Recorder:—You, gentlemen, have selected what you call my views of experimental religion, out of the numerous topics in the Christian Baptist. This appears from your beginning with this topic. If, of the numerous essays on this subject, you think the first one on this topic answers your purpose better than any other, I have no objections to your availing yourselves of it, irrespective of any thing afterwards published on the same topic; or if you please to select any other one down to the article headed "*Conscience*," No. 6, vol. 3. or if you prefer to publish your own sentiments on the subject, I will promise to publish any thing you write on the subject, to the amount of four or five pages in one number, and will take no more to myself in replying to it—on the following conditions: 1st. That you publish my replies in full in your paper; and 2dly. That you confine yourselves to one topic at a time, and abstain from every expression of passion, from every insinuation about my motives, which you know nothing about; in a word, that you confine yourselves to argument and scripture. I do not stipulate these conditions as though I feared a non-compliance, or any thing like injustice on your part; but the insinuations over the name of Geo. Waller have given some apprehension that the latter may not be an untimely hint. My willingness to be instructed or put to rights, and to give every opportunity to my readers to judge for themselves, have dictated the first condition. I court investigation, and only ask for what is commonly called "fair play," and good order in the plan of conducting it.

One topic at a time, and a firm adherence to the oracles of truth and to argument, are conditions which common sense and common justice dictate, and against which we know of no objection which honesty, integrity, and the consciousness of a good cause can offer. All of which is respectfully submitted, by your humble servant for the truth's sake,

THE EDITOR.

MANY of the great men of all departments of science, in their lucid intervals, have expressed the same views of the bible and of systematic theology:

*Milton's Treatise on Christian Doctrine.*

"If, then, the scriptures be in themselves so perspicuous, and sufficient of themselves to make men wise unto salvation through faith, and that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, through what infatuation is it that even Protestant divines persist in darkening the most momentous truths of religion by intricate comments, on the plea that such an explanation is necessary; stringing together all the useless technicalities and empty distinctions of scholastic barbarism, for the purpose of elucidating those scriptures which they are continually extolling as models of plainness? as if scripture, which possesses in itself the clearest light, and is sufficient for its own explanation, especially in matters of faith and holiness, required to have the simplicity of its divine truths more fully developed, and placed in a more distinct view, by illustrations drawn from the abstract of human science, falsely so called."

*Dr. George Campbell's views of Commentators and Commentaries, extracted from his Lectures on Systematic Theology.*

"The dogmatist knows nothing of degrees, either in evidence or in faith. He has properly no opinions or doubts. Every thing with him is either certainly true, or certainly false. Of this turn of mind I shall only say, that so far from being an indication of vigor, it is a sure indication of debility in the intellectual powers."

"Of most of our commentaries we may almost say, they speak an infinite deal of nothing.—Their reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them they are not worth the search."

"Almost every commentator hath his favorite system, which occupies his imagination, biasses his understanding, and more or less tinges all his comments."

"How unsafe, then, must it be to trust in men. When we thus implicitly follow a guide before inquiry, if we should even happen to be in the right, it is, with regard to us, a matter purely accidental."

"Whilst, therefore, it is by far the too general cry, 'Read, read commentators, systematists, paraphrasts, controvertists, demonstrations, confutations, apologies, answers, defences, replies, and ten thousand other such like;' I should think the most important advice to be, devoutly study the scriptures themselves, if you would understand their doctrine in singleness of heart."

"Rica having been to visit the library of a French convent, writes thus to his friend in Persia concerning what had passed: Father, said I to the librarian, what are these huge volumes which fill the whole side of the library? These, said he, are the interpreters of the scriptures.—There is a prodigious number of them, replied I; the scriptures must have been very dark formerly, and very clear at present. Do there remain still any doubts? Are there now any points contested? Are there? (answered he with surprise,) Are there? There are almost as many as there are lines. You astonish me, said I; what then have all these authors been doing? These authors, returned he, never searched the scriptures for what ought to be believed, but for what they did believe themselves. They did not consider them as a book wherein were contained the doctrines which they ought to receive, but as a work which might be made to authorize their own ideas."

No. 11.]

JUNE 5, 1826.

*A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things. No. XIII.*

The Bishop's Office.—No. II.

SOME of the populars sneer at the term *bishop*, as if the Spirit of God had not chosen it to designate the only legitimate "officer" in a christian congregation, who is, from office, to teach and rule. They love *Rabbi, Rabbi*, or *Reverend and Right Reverend*, too well to lay them aside, or to exchange these haughty titles for the apostolic and humble name of overseer or bishop. And I see that some of the Baptists too, who love the present order of things, and who contend for the traditions of the fathers in the mass, in their editorial labors either capitalize, or italicize, or by some outlandish mark, erect a monument of admiration at every inscribing of the name Bishop. Yet their dear "Confession of Faith" says, p. 43:

"8. A particular church gathered and completely organized according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members; and the officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the church, so called and gathered, for the peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power, or duty, which he intrusts them with, or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are bishops, or elders, and deacons."

Some again, because of the impieties of England and Rome in appropriating this term to a man who wore a wig, and a gown, and trappings, have considered it very profane indeed, to call any man a bishop who does not wear a wig and kiss the pope's toe. But to those who have got an apostolic taste, the title or name of office which Paul and Peter adopted and designated is incomparably preferable to the prescriptions of Geneva or Westminster. I have lately heard that some Baptist teachers who at first recognized the "divine right," at least of the name, and were desirous of coming up to the ancient model in all things, are now startled, if not considerably shocked, when saluted "Bishop;" but the term *reverend* can be heard without any nervous spasm. Perhaps this may be accounted for on good principles; and, indeed, if so, it is the best argument we can find for giving an exclusive preference to the terms adopted and fixed by the Spirit of Revelation. The reason why they are startled at the title on this hypothesis, they see some incongruity in its application to them. There is no incongruity arising from their want of an academical education, from their being merely acquainted with their mother tongue, from their not having a doctorate or an honorary degree. It is not on this account they are startled or affrighted at being called Bishop. But they never read in the New Testament of a bishop of two, three or four congregations; of a bishop having the "pastoral care" of a church in Rome, and Corinth, and Ephesus—in Philadelphia, Pergamos, and Thyatira, at the same time. They might have read of a plurality of bishops in one congregation, but never of a plurality of congregations under one bishop. This they may have read in the history of diocesan episcopacy, but not in the history of primitive episcopacy. But some of them are startled perhaps, on another consideration. They were not made bishops according to law. Their declaration of a special call to some work entirely distinct from the bishop's work, was the ladder which reached from the floor to the pulpit. And they do not read that any were made bishops in the hale and undegenerate days of the christian kingdom,



because of their having declared that they were inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon them the office of a bishop. In fine, there is no occasion for being particular or minute in finding out incongruities, which may appear to some a good and lawful reason why *they* should not be so designated. But they can discover no incongruity in being called minister, preacher or divine; for every one that makes public speeches or harangues on religion, is so called by their cotemporaries. The term *reverend*, too, is become such common property, that the preacher of the dreams of Swedenborg, or the leader of the dance of a Shaker meeting is fully entitled to all its honors and emoluments—equally heirs to its privileges in this world and that which is to come. That some half dozen of Baptist preachers have become shy of the name bishop, for the reasons above specified, is, indeed, a good symptom in their case. It proves that their acquaintance with the ancient order of things is increasing, that they see a discrepancy between the ancient order and the present—between themselves and the bishops instituted and appointed by the apostles.

As to our Presbyterian brethren, they make little or no pretensions to the name. They are wise enough to know that it is unsuitable to their character; but they would have some to think, that their minister and Paul's bishop are one and the same character.

Our methodist friends have not quite forgotten the glory and majesty of the Lord Archbishop of York:—for even until this hour archepiscopacy has some charms in their eyes. In other words, a few of this brotherhood still like the remains of diocesan episcopacy. They seem to admire it, even in its ruins. I believe, however, such is the progress of light amongst this zealous people, that few, if any of their leaders, consider there is a divine right for either their bishops or form of church government, other than "*vox populi, vox Dei*." Yet still their "church government" has too many heads, even when the horns are broken off.

The good old *high church* bishops are not within the sphere of comparison. There is no point of contact; no one side of the system that can be measured by any side of primitive episcopacy.

Our baptist brethren began in the spirit, but ended in the flesh, on their adopting a species of presbyterial independency—licensing of preachers, and then converting these preachers into elders, with the exclusive right of administering "sealing ordinances," and creating or finishing an order of its own kind.

But the fact is, very generally, that few of the leaders of religious assemblies seem to know, or are able to decide, whether they should be called evangelists, preachers, elders, bishops, or ambassadors; but the term minister or divine seems to embrace them all.

To many it seems but of little consequence to be tenacious of the name. Why not then call the leaders priests? Why not then call them astrologers, soothsayers, or oneirocritics, if the name be indifferent? Because, says one, those names are used to denote quite different characters. For the same reason, therefore, let the names which the apostles adopted be used in their own acceptance, and let those things, persons and offices which the apostles said nothing about, be named or styled as the inventors please, but call not bitter sweet, nor sweet bitter. Let us not call the messenger of a congregation, an elder. Let us not call a preacher, a

bishop. Let us not call a bishop, a divine; nor a deacon, a ruling elder. In a word, let us give to divine institutions divine names, and to human institutions human names.

Were christian societies to constitute christian bishops, and to designate them by their proper title or name of office, many important results would exhibit themselves, amongst which, none of the least would be the levelling the haughty and supercilious pretensions of those who claim another office under this name, and designate themselves as the only persons to be so viewed and denominated.

Another happy circumstance resulting from this course, would be the discountenancing and suppressing the pretensions and enthusiastic conceits of those who are imposing themselves upon society, under the pretence that they are specially called and sent by the Holy Spirit of God to preach. If they are sent to preach, let them go to preach—but they can plead no right to officiate as bishops under the call to preach. If they are *called* to go and preach the gospel to every creature, they dare not, of course, refuse to go; nor dare they assume a work in relation to which they are not called, and to which no man was ever otherwise called, than as the brethren, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, called him. For amongst all the qualifications by which Paul would have a bishop chosen—the modern special call is not to be found—I again repeat, that the adoption of the course divinely recommended, would, in due time, suppress the impositions practised upon the unsuspecting, by a class of raving, ranting mountebanks, who are playing themselves off as a kind of little half inspired ones, who just give to the people what they pretend they have got from heaven; and say that so clear is their divine mission and call, that eternal woe awaits them if they preach not the gospel.

The bishops of apostolic creation are sometimes called elders—because they were generally aged persons, and always amongst the oldest converts in the community in which they officiated. But the office is no where called the elder's office. There is nothing in the term elder, which can designate the nature of any office. But the term bishop implies a good and arduous work.

While on the term elder, it may be remarked, that there is no greater incongruity than to see a stripling or a young man from twenty to thirty, styled elder; and if the name does not suit his years, it is a very strong reason in favor of the conclusion that the office of a bishop does not.

Here I had intended to have called the reader's attention to the call and appointment of a bishop—but circumstances beyond my control, forbid an effort of this kind for the present.

EDITOR.

To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.

B— Co. (Md.) April 1, 1826.

DEAR BROTHER,—ALTHOUGH a stranger to your correspondents Faithful, see page, 184 and J—H—, see page 222, I feel an affection that proceeds for the truth's sake, that I cannot withhold from their view a statement of a church of Jesus Christ attending to the ordinances in their simplicity. Although I am in practice for years with the order described below, yet to copy this account is far better than I could do it otherwise—and your time being so much occupied with printing the New Testament, you have not been able to comply with what you say at the close of yours to Faithful, that is—"We intend

to give the history of the progress and proficiency of some congregations who have taken this course, and are now enjoying a participation of the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ." You will please publish this account in the present volume, and my anxiety for the dear brethren, Faithful and J—H—, will be relieved.

Yours in love,

W— C—.

The following is copied from the first volume of the Christian Magazine, printed in Edinburgh, in 1819.

*An Account of a Remarkable Occurrence in a Late Journey.—An Apostolic Church.*

HAVING occasion, some time ago, to travel in the county of —, I arrived, on Saturday evening, in the town of —. Being a stranger, I made inquiry of my host respecting the places of worship in the town. He told me there were two established churches, a Burgher and an anti-Burgher meeting, an Episcopal chapel, and of late, said he, another meeting has been set up, whose mode of worship is different from all the others. I was curious to learn wherein it differed; but he could give me no distinct answer, only, he said, that many of the town's people did not approve of it, though, he had heard, some of the graver cast liked it very much. Next morning I inquired where I should find the new place of worship he had mentioned, and being directed, I repaired to it.—Two persons, whom I supposed to be the elders of the church, soon entered.—One of them, after a short prayer, imploring the divine presence, gave out a hymn, celebrating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He then read a portion of scripture from the Old Testament and another from the New. That from the New Testament was judiciously chosen, as illustrating some part of what had been read from the Old. Having mentioned several of the members by name, who were variously afflicted, he called on one of the brethren to pray. He was an aged disciple of grave appearance; his prayer seemed to be the effusion of a heart alive to God—plain, artless, and appropriate. I was particularly struck by the affectionate manner in which he prayed for these distressed brethren. It reminded me of the apostle's description of the body of Christ, "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." After again uniting in praise, the other elder addressed the church, in terms which made such an impression on my mind, that, I believe, I repeat his words almost *verbatim*—"I have now," said he, "brethren, to lay before you a matter peculiarly painful, it is the case of our brother —. His crime is described in the fifth chapter of the Galatians, the 19th verse. The fall of our brother, I lament to say, is well known to the world, and has caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. By the offence of this person (for he did not again name him) the church is called to deep humiliation before God. In this mournful case, we have a striking instance of the fatal effects of unnecessarily mingling with the world. This was the first step of his defection, and it paved the way for all that has followed. When first spoken to on the subject he positively denied it; but has now confessed it to me and two of the brethren." [Here these two brethren simply attested the truth of the statement.]—After a short pause he proceeded—"With the law of our Lord and Master in our hands, we can be at no loss as to our duty in this case. That law is explicitly stated in the fifth chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, from the fourth

verse to the end, [which he read.] Here then, you perceive, brethren, there is no alternative; the Lord Jesus commands us, both for this person's good, and that of the body, to separate him from our fellowship." The church, (who I now perceived were sitting together in one place) having signified their conviction that this was their duty, the elder, with much solemnity said, "We then, as a church of Jesus Christ, and acting by his authority, do, in obedience to his commandment, separate — from our fellowship." He then prayed, in a very appropriate and impressive manner, for the unhappy subject of discipline, that the ordinance of God which had now been attended to, might be blessed to his soul, in bringing him to repentance—and to the church, in leading them to watchfulness, self abasement, and continual dependance on the grace of Jesus. After prayer, the 101st psalm was sung, which formed an extremely suitable conclusion to the solemn service. I never witnessed a scene more deeply affecting. The countenance of every person present bespoke his feelings. How is it, said I to myself, that I have lived so long among christians, and have never, till now, seen this plain and positive law of Jesus carried into effect? How beneficial are the laws of his kingdom! how much are they calculated to promote the spiritual life of his people, and to awaken the thoughtless and inconsiderate! The church now proceeded to—what I afterwards understood was a stated part of their service every Lord's day—the observance of the Lord's supper. The simplicity with which this divine ordinance was attended to, was, in itself, edifying. I beheld a representation of the unity of the body of Christ, which I never before witnessed. The words of the institution were read by one of the elders, a few remarks were then made on the nature of the Lord's supper, and on the spirit in which it ought to be observed. He then gave thanks; and then breaking the bread gave it to the disciples, who divided it among themselves. Having again united in thanksgiving, he gave also the cup, and when all had drank of it, concluded with a short exhortation, and singing an appropriate hymn. This part of the service being closed, the elder said, "Let us now, brethren, attend to the ordinance of mutual exhortation:" when some of the members spoke, for a few minutes alternately, with much simplicity, earnestness, and evident humbleness of mind. The addresses of the brethren were, properly speaking, exhortations—calculated to excite to the performance of duty, and to bear, with patience, the various sufferings of the present life: each of them had some relation to the others, and their combined influence was highly salutary. Is not this, said I to myself, an exhibition of what the apostle means, when he speaks of "the body of Christ edifying itself in love?" The exhortations of the brethren were followed by an address from one of the elders, in which he briefly recapitulated the topics brought forward by the members, and enforced the duties to which their attention had been called. One of the brethren was again called on to pray. After again uniting in praise, the elder, in a short prayer, implored the divine benediction on all their services, and entreated the blessing of God, while they attended to the fellowship of the saints. The church then sat down, when a collection was made, and the worship closed. The two hours which I thus spent with these dear people, were among the happiest and most profitable I ever enjoyed on earth. I bless God, that unexpectedly I had an opportu-



nity of witnessing the order of a church, which commended itself to my mind, as combining all the ends of christian association, and of which I had previously formed some idea from reading the New Testament. After an interval the service proceeded, and the time was occupied by prayer and praise, the teaching of the elders, and the reading of the word of God; which last, I observed, throughout the day formed a conspicuous part of their worship.

"Being under the necessity of leaving this town early next morning, I was very desirous of learning their history. Accordingly, when worship was over in the evening, I accosted a person whom I had noticed among the members: "Sir," said I, "I am a stranger in this place, and was happily led to your place of worship to-day. Although unknown to any of you in the face, I trust I am one with you in the faith and hope of the gospel. I was very much edified with your order, and would esteem it a great favor if you would give me some particulars of your history." He very kindly invited me to his house, and gave me the following interesting detail:—"I have no doubt," said he, "that the motives of your inquiry are good; I shall, therefore, without reserve, give you the information you request. We have met together as a church for these six years past. The original members were intimately acquainted with one another. Each of us had, for a considerable time, been groaning under the defects of the societies with which we were then connected. We clearly perceived that they bore none of the features of the churches set in order by the apostles; but we sinfully contented ourselves with our condition. Our chief comfort, as to christian society, arose from assembling together once a-week in what is called a fellowship meeting. On one of these occasions a member spoke with some freedom on the distress he felt, arising from the cause above mentioned. This led the way to a free conversation; and we soon found that our distress was not that of an individual, but common to us all. We therefore resolved to walk together as a church in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord Jesus, diligently searching the scriptures to know his will, and fervently praying to be guided by him. From that period we have assembled regularly on the first day of the week. The Lord has been pleased graciously to countenance us. Our beginning was indeed small; we were few and despised; but walking, as I trust, in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, we have been greatly multiplied. We had soon the satisfaction of choosing two of our brethren, with whose qualifications we were entirely satisfied, as our elders. Their labors of love have been much blessed, and one and another has from time to time been added to our number. Our communion commenced," he continued, "in the full conviction that we were yielding obedience to the Lord Jesus. And now we have increasing experience of the truth of our Saviour's declaration, that if any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. We have no standard but the will of our Master; and this we find so clearly stated in the scriptures, that, with the teachable spirit of disciples, we are in no danger of misunderstanding it." "The brethren," said I, "appear to have much love to each other." "Yes," he replied, "we know the benefits of christian fellowship, by coming together into one place on the first day of the week, and regularly observing the ordinances of Christ, we not only get better

acquainted, but our interest in each other is greatly promoted. If a brother or a sister be absent they are immediately missed, and inquiry is made for them. Our elders know well the situation of every individual; and in case of distress, the church is particularly informed. Thus our sick, or otherwise distressed brethren, are not neglected. Christian sympathy is excited, and we are stirred up to the duty of weeping with those that weep. In short," continued he, "we have convincing proof of the wisdom of all the appointments of Christ, and how eminently the observance of them is calculated to cherish and mature every christian grace, the people of God are not aware of the loss they sustain by neglecting any one of them." "I was much gratified," said I, "by the short exhortations of the brethren to-day; is every brother called on to exhort in the church?" "Yes," he answered, "we think the commandment to exhort one another, can be limited no otherwise, than by a brother possessing no talent for it. It is the duty of our elders to take care that the edification of the church be not marred; and if a church be composed of real disciples abuses will rarely occur. We have no right to make laws to ourselves; it is our province to follow implicitly the injunctions of our master. A few Sabbaths ago, one of our brethren spoke on the consolations which the gospel affords to believers under the heaviest trials, and with much feeling urged the duty of cordial submission to the will of God. The advice came with peculiar impression, from one whose deep affliction was well known to his brethren. Indeed, who that knows the Lord is not fitted to suggest a word in season, and how gracious is the Saviour's appointment, that his disciples should comfort one another with the words of truth. Individual experience thus becomes a general benefit. The Lord Jesus, my friend, bestows gifts on his people, and every one knows that gifts are improved by exercising them." "But does not the singularity of your observances, draw upon you the censure of others?" "I believe it does; but," added he, with a look of peculiar satisfaction, "a full conviction that we are obeying the commandments of the Lord Jesus, raises us superior to these little obstacles. While we follow our own convictions of duty, and are thankful, that, in this highly favored country, every man enjoys liberty to worship God according to his own conscience, we, at the same time, cherish a loving spirit towards all who truly fear God; we earnestly desire the universal spread of the gospel; and use every means in our power for the salvation of perishing sinners around us." I thanked this worthy man for the free and open manner in which he had talked with me, and, with much regret, bade him adieu!

Next morning I pursued my journey, but not without casting a wishful eye on the spot where these disciples sojourn. The occurrences of this day I shall not soon forget. Never do I read of the churches of the New Testament but I realize the christians at ——. Send forth, O God! thy light and thy truth, unite thy people. Thou hast indeed given them a good law; thy commandments concerning all things are right. "Thus says the Lord, I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you by the way that you should go. Oh! that you had hearkened to my commandments, then had your peace been as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea!"\*

\* Would the churches at Jerusalem, Philippi, &c., the models of the above, be esteemed orthodox now?—PUE.

*Christian Morality.—No. II.*

THERE is as much wisdom exhibited in concealing some things as there is in revealing others. Parents, in relation to their own children, have incontestible proofs of this, if they are parents of discernment. Our Heavenly Father, in revealing himself and his designs to the children of men, has purposely concealed many things which it would have been unwise, in relation to all ends and results, to have discovered. There was evidently some principle, some statute in the counsels of the Omniscient, which allowed the discovery of certain things, and forbade the disclosure of others. When this principle or rule of revelation is apprehended many important results are acquired, many reflections present themselves which are of much value to the student of the Bible.

We have no doubt but it is quite practicable to ascertain the rule or principle which authorizes the revelation of some things, and which withholds from mortal man the knowledge of others.

When we take into view the object proposed, in giving to the world the bible, we have got into the possession of more than half the secret. And what was this? It will be said, The illumination of the world. But in reference to some end? Assuredly in reference to some end; for, without this end in view, there could be no selection of items or topics on which to address men. God has not disclosed the principles of astronomy or navigation in any part of his revelation; yet if the object of his revelation had been the mere illumination of the mind on subjects hitherto unknown, the systems and laws of astronomy or chemistry, would have been in times past a proper subject of revelation. But it is not the mere illumination of the mind which constituted a primary object in any communication from God to man.

To come directly to the point before us, it must be observed that the volume of revelation was not given to angels, nor written for them; nor was it given to man in his primitive state, nor adapted to a perfect innocent being; but it was designed for, addressed to and conferred upon fallen and polluted human beings, composed of soul, body and spirit, in such circumstances as those in which we first find ourselves when introduced to life. From all which the inference is unavoidable, viz. That the bible is designed for, and adapted to, the children of men in their present circumstances, to improve their condition here, and to fit them to become members of a pure, refined and exalted society hereafter.

It has long been discovered, and almost universally admitted, that three words constitute the sum total of human misfortune in this life.—These are, ignorance, guilt and bondage. From the brutal ignorance of the Hottentot, up to the refined ignorance of a sceptic philosopher, there are many intermediate degrees; but as respects the true knowledge which the bible communicates, there is a total blank in the extremes and in all the intermediate degrees.

To fit man for heaven, in one sentence, is the design of the whole volume. This being admitted, then it follows that nothing is revealed which is not directly or indirectly conducive to this end. The grand rule or principle on which all revelation has ever proceeded, is this—whatever may or can purify man, is lawful and benevolent to communicate; whatever cannot accomplish this, Wisdom says, Disclose it not.

Curiosity has prompted a thousand queries, to which the bible deigns no reply. And why?

Because, if answered, they would contribute nothing to the purification of the heart, or to the reformation of the life. God's sublime and glorious scheme of ameliorating and reforming the world is founded upon the actual condition of man. And as intelligence, purity of heart, and rectitude of life, are as inseparably connected with present and future happiness, as ignorance and guilt are with bondage and wretchedness, both here and hereafter, the bible is prepared, was bestowed, and is adapted, to the promotion of intelligence and purity, as prerequisites, as indispensable, as a *sine qua non* to happiness. "The whole scripture is divinely inspired, and is profitable for teaching, for confutation, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, and thoroughly fitted for every good work." Intelligence, purity of heart, and uprightness of life, are the sole objects for which the bible was bestowed on the world. As ignorance, guilt and bondage, constitute the sum total of human misery, so intelligence, purity and the freedom of the truth, comprehend the whole object, design and end of divine revelation.

Christians, then, egregiously mistake, who value themselves on the account of their superior intelligence, or who pursue information in the things revealed, merely for its own sake. Unless this knowledge is conducive and allied to the art of living well, it merely puffs up and avails nothing. I have seen some christians who seem to think that the clearness of their views and the comprehension of their understanding would invade the kingdom of heaven and take the citadel of God, whose piety and purity were far below the standard of a Syrophenician woman, were far below the scale on which Zaccheus the publican was measured. In fact, a man who glories in his intellectual attainments in the bible, (and of this class there are not a few) and pursues the knowledge of the volume for its own sake, resembles a foolish husbandman who boasts of his thousand measures of wheat and his thousand measures of corn, who, as yet, has but ploughed his fields, and intends nothing more until harvest. Yet intelligence is one of the noblest of all things; for without it there is no purity. It is only, however, when it is pursued and acquired for the express purpose of living piously and virtuously, that it is a blessing to the possessor. We sometimes meet with more piety, purity and virtue, amongst those of inferior intellectual endowments, than amongst those of superior attainments. "For knowledge puffs up." As, therefore, the bible was written to impart intelligence to men, as this intelligence was designed to promote purity, and as purity is essential to happiness, we may see what ought to be our constant aim in all our studies, in all our inquiries into the meaning of the bible. And that, as Solomon says, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," so the conclusion of the whole matter is, "Fear God and keep his commandments," for this is the whole happiness of man.

EDITOR.

*Theoretic, Scholastic, Metaphysical, Speculative Theology.*

THE editors of the *Baptist Recorder* appear to be very strongly attached to dogmatic theology. With many, indeed, of the admirers of Aristotelian logic and the Geneva theology, *soundness in the faith* means no more than pronouncing with an unfaltering tongue a few dogmas in the quaint style of puritanical divinity. Greater fears are entertained, and stronger doubts of my



orthodoxy are expressed by those zealous and sound divines, because I will not subscribe a few unprofitable and foolish dogmas, than if I had denied the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment—at least so it appears to me. Great efforts are made to enlist the feelings and prejudices of those with whom *sound* is infinitely more important than *sense*, against my endeavors to call the attention of christians off from the vanities of spiritual quacks, to the pure milk of the divine word. I am represented, if not in so many words, yet in effect, as “in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity,” because of my essay on experimental religion. In a late Recorder an extract is given from some Christian Secretary, pronouncing encomiums upon Messrs. Waller and Clack for their *able* efforts to expose my heresy, in which there is about a round half dozen of plump falsehoods, gravely told, and no doubt undesignedly from the overflowings of an honest zeal in defence of orthodoxy, which led the author to speak on a subject with which he was entirely unacquainted, and concerning a person of whom he scarcely knows the name. Yet this will pass very well with those whose “inward consciousness” is made a test of divine revelation, and whose “experience” constitutes a tribunal from which there is no appeal. May the Lord have mercy upon those who oppose the restoration of the ancient order of things, and teach them the lesson which Gamaliel taught his compeers in the Sanhedrim! Poor men! I can enter into their views and feelings, for I know their system; I know my own motives too: and were they a little wiser they would be the first to aid, and the last to oppose, what all who are born of God are praying for every day—the union, peace, harmony, and love of christians on the foundation which the Great Architect himself laid for his spiritual temple. Should they succeed in securing the attachment of the misguided to their moth-eaten systems, what reward can they expect, and what do they anticipate from the Judge of All? Will he praise them for preferring the dogmas of the schools to the testimony of the apostles? Will he commend them for flattering the people that they are just up to the model of the New Testament; that they are perfect in their views and practices, wanting nothing? Will he thank them for their zeal in maintaining the traditions of synods and councils in contravention of his own apostles? O! that they who have influence among the people, would use that influence to enlighten and purify their minds, and not to confirming them in cold, and sterile, and lifeless theories.

The following dogmas are expressive of the views of the editors on one topic, in relation to which they have something in almost every paper.

“1. The regeneration of the heart is the work of God, by his Spirit exerted immediately and directly upon the hearts and understandings of men.”

“2. The regeneration of the heart is not the work of God, by his Spirit exerted immediately and directly upon the hearts and understandings of men; but it is the effect of the word believed. The word itself is *spirit* and *life*. All that is necessary to produce what is called the *new man*, is an honest reception and firm belief of the truths of the gospel; for the operation of faith is always in perfect accordance with the nature of the truth believed.”

The first of these positions the editors declare to be a true one, and that the Baptists have long

since “adopted” it. It is an alien, and they have adopted it. Who “adopted” the second position, the editors do not say, and for my part I do not know. For I have never met with a creed which says, “the regeneration of the heart is not the work of God, by his Spirit,” &c. &c. I hope the editors are so far regenerated themselves as not to invent dogmas for others that they may injure the reputation of others, and gain credit to themselves for their orthodoxy. But they avow the first dogma to be their own creed, and bolster it up by the “internal evidence of consciousness” and the right it has to be true because the Baptists have long since adopted it. This last bulwark of the dogma I hesitate to admit. For neither the Baptist Confession of Faith says so, nor do I believe that the Baptists generally teach this dogma. However, whether they do or do not teach it, is, with me, a matter of no moment; for I am assured that neither John the Baptist, nor any Baptist congregation in the apostolic age, either taught, or entertained, or expressed such a dogma. But it is either expressed with ingenuity, or mental reservation; and where two opinions may be formed of an action or expression, charity says, always prefer the more favorable one. We shall do so. Now the proposition says, “the regeneration of the heart is the work of God, by his Spirit exerted immediately.” Mark this word *immediately*, i. e. without the intervention of any other cause—independent of the word. So, then, Messrs. Waller and Clack declare in favor of this dogma, that the regeneration of the heart is the work of God, by his Spirit exerted independent of the word or revelation of God, directly upon the hearts and understandings of men.—This they positively declare to be, with them, the standard of orthodoxy. Now the question is, What advantage will result to any person from implicitly or explicitly believing, avowing, or teaching this dogma? It can effect no change in the heart or affections of any human being. “For men are regenerated by the Spirit of God, independent of the word,” and, most assuredly, independently of this dogma. The believing of it can regenerate no body, if it be a true dogma. If this dogma be true, the Bible and the Alcoran are alike concerned in the regeneration of the human heart. This is no enthusiasm. It is the deliberate, premeditated, and written position of brethren Waller and Clack. The Spirit of God immediately and directly regenerates the heart! I have given Walker’s definition of the term *immediately*, lest I should be supposed to give too high a coloring to the terms in which this position is expressed. There is one thing which they say of this position which I think passing strange. It is this: “On its truth are founded all their (the Baptists’) exertions for the salvation of sinners.” That is, because the regeneration of the heart is the work of God, by his Spirit exerted independent of the Old and New Testament, the Baptists are themselves to be the means of regenerating men by the Old and New Testament, printed, published, read, and preached, as the medium or means of regeneration; and all the while adopt, maintain, and proclaim the position that men are regenerated immediately by the Spirit of God. If notes of admiration were not too common things, we should here call for battalions of them. No wonder, then, that an improved version of the New Testament is considered by brother George Waller as a superfluous and useless thing. In fact, the reading of it in Greek or Syrochaldaic to an English scholar is just as useful, on the

adopted position, as profitable as any thing else. No wonder that these divines contend for a special call to convert men. Did I say no wonder? Yes, it is a great wonder; for what use is their call and preaching, if the Spirit of God regenerates the human heart independent of all second causes. I will not further expose the ruinous influence of such a dogma if it be true. I will just leave with these brethren one dilemma—either their dogma is true or not true. If true, then it matters not what doctrine is taught by me on the subject of regeneration; for the Spirit of God regenerates the human heart independently of all doctrine, true or false, even of the bible itself. But if untrue, then, indeed, to act under its influence is most injurious, as it will necessarily make the scriptures a dead letter, and all preaching vain.

I have no disposition to enter into the field of speculation on such dogmas. But were I disposed to make the most of such a position, did I wish to gain an advantage over an enemy, I could not wish for a more favorable dogma; for I do not think that any other theorem of the Jansenites, not even their invocations for the dead, is more vulnerable than this dogma. I do fondly hope that these brethren speak and act otherwise than this dogma will authorize, in addressing men on the subject of religion. Perhaps there is some error in the composition of the sentence which they have overlooked, for I would rather account for it in any other way than to suppose this sentiment to be a principle of action with them. Indeed I almost know it is not a principle of action with them: however pretty it may look on the lid of a snuff-box, or on vellum, I think it is not written on their hearts.

But all such preaching and teaching, all such theory is worse than mere trifling. A theory about the formation of Adam out of the dust, whether his creation began with his head or his feet, or whether he was instantaneously or immediately complete, and all his members simultaneously formed, is just as useful, as profitable to men, as any theory of regeneration which I have seen; and I am always ready to shew that he who preaches any theory, orthodox or heterodox, preaches not the gospel of Jesus Christ. To this sentence I invite attention, and challenge investigation.

I have not heard from the editors of the Recorder on my last. I have seen their ninth but not their eighth number, and seeing so much insinuation and indirect opposition to, I am persuaded, they know not what, I thought it expedient just to give them a hint how vulnerable they are, to assure them that their either propping an old theory, or attempting a new one, is out of the question altogether.

EDITOR.

#### Church Government.

THE ancient independent writers have poured forth abundance of nonsense about meetings for counsel and advice. Some of them have supposed that though *Acts* xv. does not afford a model for meetings of ministers to make authoritative decrees for the churches, yet that it sanctions such meetings for the purpose of giving counsel and advice to the churches. But it is not possible to explain this passage in such a manner as to establish the divine right of assemblies for advice. This meeting gave not advice, but decrees; did not submit opinions to be canvassed, but doctrines to be believed, and precepts to be observed. If it is at all a model for any foreign interference, it establishes absolute

authority on the one hand, and passive and unlimited obedience on the other. I cannot see any thing that could tempt inquiring christians to adopt this theory, except that they have not been thoroughly purged from Presbyterian prejudices, or a desire not to appear all at once to go so great a distance from the churches of this world. Perhaps a mixture of these motives have operated with them. They are a little shocked themselves, and perhaps are afraid that others will be more so, with the idea of being so unlike to other societies called churches, in every distinguished feature. On the contrary, I am of opinion that we ought not to wish to hide from the churches of the world how much we differ from them. We ought to be solicitous rather to show them that, in every distinguishing feature, the kingdom of Christ differs from the kingdom of this world. We ought not to keep the worshippers of the Beast in countenance by making an image of the Beast. There is no reason to fear alarming the prejudices of the world, or of christians. If the cause is the Lord's, we may safely rest it upon his shoulders. If men will receive instruction from the word of God as to the nature of Christ's kingdom, it is well; but if any man will be obstinately and perversely ignorant, let him be ignorant. It is our duty to hold forth the word of life in every part of it; it is in the Lord's hand who shall receive it. He has no need of our wisdom to help forward his plans.

But if such meetings are not instituted from this passage, *jure divino*, they cannot plead it to sanction their innocency. If they are not the offspring of the wisdom of God, they must be the offspring of the wisdom of man; and the Lord will no more countenance one human religious institution than he will another. To say that such assemblies are useful, yet not instituted, is to arraign the wisdom of Jesus as a legislator, and to deny the competency of his institutions. If they are not divinely appointed they cannot be useful, they cannot be innocent. I am bold to predict that wherever they are tried, either an increasing acquaintance with the word of God, or a deeper knowledge of the nature of Christ's kingdom, will lay them aside, or they will degenerate into an engine of Satan. In the very first instance they must tend to damp inquiry in the churches, and gradually habituate them to allow others to have the trouble of thinking for them.—*Carson's Reply to Brown on Discipline.*

#### Two Anecdotes.

"WE know," says Campbell in his Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, "who they were in ancient times that sought honor one of another, who affected the principal seats in the synagogues and the uppermost rooms at feasts, who loved greetings in the markets, and to be called by men, Rabbi, Rabbi. We know also who it was that expressly prohibited, amongst his disciples, such unbecoming emulation and worldly vanity, who enjoined them not to seek honor of men, or to contend who, in the judgment of men, should be greatest; but to seek that honor only which comes from God. We know also who it was that made usefulness the standard of greatness, and pronounced him to be possessed of the highest dignity who is most humble and serviceable; who, instead of courting, is solicitous to avoid such enviable distinctions. On which of these models the convention at Trent and other preceding councils were formed, I shall leave to the candid and impartial to determine. I shall conclude this lecture with a



story, homely indeed, but apposite:—An English country parson was bragging in a large company of the success he had had in reforming his parishioners, on which his labors, he said, had produced a wonderful change for the better. Being asked in what respect, he replied, that when he came first among them they were a set of unmannerly clowns, who paid him no more deference than they did to one another; did not so much as pull off their hat when they spoke to him, but bawled out as roughly and familiarly as though he were their equal; whereas now they never presumed to address him but cap in hand, and in a submissive voice, made him their best bow when they were at ten yards distance, and styled him *Your Reverence* at every word. A Quaker who had heard the whole patiently, made answer—"And so, friend, the upshot of this reformation, of which thee hast so much carnal glorying, is, that thee hast taught thy people to worship thyself."

"IMPLICIT FAITH has been sometimes ludicrously styled *fides carbonaria*, from the noted story of one who, examining an ignorant collier on his religious principles, asked him what it was he believed. He answered, "I believe what the church believes." The other rejoined, "What, then, does the church believe?" He replied readily, "The church believes what I believe." The other, desirous if possible to bring him to particulars, once more resumes his inquiry: "Tell me, then, I pray you, what it is that you and the church both believe?" The only answer the collier could give was, "Why truly, sir, the church and I both—believe the same thing." This is implicit faith in perfection, and, in the estimation of some celebrated Doctors, the sum of necessary and saving knowledge in a christian."—*Campbell's Lectures.*

No. 12.] JULY 6, 1826.

*For the Christian Baptist.*

WHEN deep sleep comes upon man, and mortals, tossed and harrowed in their minds, enjoy, for a moment, the sweets of forgetfulness, which, upon the whole, has been conducive to my happiness; having been for months past disturbed, not only by day, but sometimes by night, on the great difficulty of deciding who, of all the guides of the people, are under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If, Mr. Editor, the vision will, in your view, be of any use to any, please lay it before the public.

MIRZAH.

IN visions of the night I saw most distinctly through the whole area of a field, which I supposed to be many thousand miles square, the most extensive groupes of human beings, which fancy when awake could well conceive of. The field itself exhibited no little variety. On all sides there were hills and vallies, woods and rivers, of singular aspect, yet presenting no obstruction to my sight, for every elevation and protuberance appeared to be transparent as glass. The field, as already described, was square, though at intervals it appeared to be octagonal, and sometimes to have a hundred equal sides. Of the numberless curious and attractive scenes which crowded upon my sight, few of which can either be distinctly recalled or related, I shall attempt, at present, the recital of but a few. Never on earth before did I see a field of any dimensions so diversified with roads and paths. Indeed, it sometimes appeared as though the whole area had been once trodden with human feet in the way of large and small roads, straight and crooked paths. Even at the present time,

during my vision, it appeared as if the whole premises were allotted to engineers and supervisors for the purpose of making experiments in the construction of roads and paths. No conceivable design could have located several hundred paths, side by side, sometimes parallel to each other, and sometimes as serpentine as the milky way, other than the mere project of experiment. For notwithstanding the myriads of paths in every direction in this vast field, there were but two gates and principal roads, which all seemed at one time or another to frequent.

The whole scenery was illuminated with a very strange and fluctuating sort of light, which seemed to emanate from no fixed fountain or source, but differing in degrees at different intervals, and sometimes so very faint that objects quite contiguous could not be discriminated from one another. The countless myriads which were always in motion in this vast area, kept up such a continual noise, that for a long time, though extremely anxious to learn something about them, I could not distinguish one articulate sound. They often appeared in great agitation, and in large and small groupes appeared to oppose each other, and the stronger often compelled the weaker to desert one path and flee to another. Either a gleam of light, or something under that appearance, often seemed to arrest the attention of those in its vicinity, and all seemed attracted by it, and, for a while, appeared tranquil in contemplating it; but in a shorter or longer period it vanished, and they all became as restless as ever.

After many fruitless efforts to acquire some information on all that pressed upon my attention, I resolved to mingle with some crowd or to set out a solitary traveller in quest of information. While thus pondering in my mind, a venerable figure approached me, and looking very earnestly in my face, said, "Whence camest thou hither?" I could make no reply. He, without giving me time to propose a question, said "It is all as uncertain as before." What? said I. "Paradise," he replied, and instantly leaving the path in which he stood, began his march in another, and vouchsafed me no farther information.

At this moment, turning to the East, I saw an immense crowd assembled before a chair of huge magnitude, in which many hundred persons could be comfortably seated, yet but one august personage sat in it, beneath whose feet, on platforms of different elevations, stood myriads of mitred dignitaries, having inscribed upon their foreheads "The Called and Sent." At the right hand of the chair stood a huge cross, on which, as well as on the chair, was inscribed J. C. V.\* While I was gazing with astonishment on these strange scenes which I could not understand, I observed many individuals, and sometimes considerable groupes, abandoning the countless millions which stood in solemn gaze upon the chair, its occupant, and the dignitaries beneath, and saw them pass through a grotesque and antique gate, on the side of which, fronting the chair was inscribed *Heresy* and on the other side *Reformation*. Through this gate of enormous dimensions, which permitted not only whole groupes to pass together without inconvenience, but also to carry with them immense loads, resembling bales, each inscribed with M. E. T.† I directed my course, and saw two chairs, something smaller than the former, and not quite so venerable, dig-

\* I suppose the letters, J. C. V. denote the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

† It is presumed these letters are the Latin initials of Traditions of the Mother Church.—Ed.

nified with two patriarchal rabbis resembling the archbishops of York and Canterbury; a crown of gold, engraved and lettered, "*Defender of the Faith*," hung at equal distance from them both. Around them stood twenty-four fathers, with beautiful vestments covered with sentences of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, all importing "*The Called and Sent*." Many thousands knelt before them with four cornered tiaras, having the same inscription, "*The Called and Sent*."

A gate fronting these chairs, less than the former, but having the same inscriptions on both sides, was equally thronged with dissenters, who, after gazing a while at those exalted pontificals, withdrew through it and disappeared. I pursued them in great haste, determined to obtain some certain information. But, to my astonishment, on passing through it, more than a hundred paths diverged from its threshold in all directions, each one leading to a small eminence covered with chairs, and all filled with incumbents, bearing upon their little tiaras, in small capitals, the same inscription, "*The Called and Sent*." Larger or smaller crowds stood before them all; but so fluctuating that no one could tell which was likely to become the greatest or the least.

The unceasing din and commotion between the outposts of each crowd reminded me of nothing so much as the swarms and commotions of a large assemblage of bees when the sun approaches Cancer. I could distinguish not one sentence, though every chair was filled with an orator, and in every crowd a multitude appeared repeating the same sentences. In despair I retired to a long skirt of woods which covered the margin of a tranquil stream, and there expected to find a requiem for meditation. But soon as I descended towards its borders, I observed a great many stragglers who had deserted all the crowds and hastened to the river. These seemed at first to be following me, but passed me by without uttering a word, until they reached the stream, into which they plunged themselves as though they were weary of life and sought a termination of its toils and uncertainties. I looked to see them emerge no more, but with no little surprise I saw them every one ascend the opposite bank, and were met there by twelve long bearded men, wearing leathern girdles and camblet gowns. Each of these seemed eager to seize by the hand every one who emerged from the river, and to lead them into beautiful arbors and booths pitched at a respectful distance from each other along the stream. Each of these twelve primates had a different head dress, but all inscribed with "*The called and sent*." At this moment I found my feet wet with the water of the stream, the edge of which I had unconsciously approached. At this instant I was hailed and invited to cross by a very humble and venerable figure on the opposite shore. But while in suspense I was caught by the skirts by a number of "*The called and sent*"\* of the crowd nearest the river, having "*liberty and independence*" added to all their other inscriptions. These pulled me back, while I was zealously invited by those on the opposite side to enter their arbut arbors. One exclaimed, "If you fear the stream I will send you a canoe;" another said, "Nay, here is a balloon;" a third pointed to a rainbow over a bridge, and a fourth said, "Swim the stream, or be lost forever." In the mean time a crowd like harpies had a hold of every protuberance on my raiment; not a button

was left on my garments, and I was likely to be rent from head to foot. In the mean time, frantic with despair, I struggled for life, and by a fortunate effort disentangled myself and plunged into the stream. Soon as I had crossed I was seized by at least half a dozen of the sages I had seen, and was as likely to be torn to pieces as before. I begged for time to change my apparel, which being granted, I made my escape to a cavern I descried in an unfrequented spot at some distance, where I sat musing on all that had passed. After some time a refugee, like myself, entered the same cavern, and, after discerning me, said, "Friend, how camest thou hither?" I told him my story, and he told me his. He informed me that he had been for many years on his feet, running in the different paths, and now, for the first time, had sat down. He told me he had found a map in a cave which he had long wished to peruse, but never till now had found an opportunity.

All the information he had gathered during many years traveling amounted to no more than this: That it had been once announced in these regions that a happier country, called Paradise, had been once prepared for all who desired it; that the way to this country had been graphically laid down, but that a predecessor of that godlike man who sat upon the first huge chair which I noticed, had secreted the map of the country and the high road that led to it, and that his successors said they could describe it better by words than by maps, and that all the different roads and paths which I had noticed had been laid down by different great and wise men of former times; that all those different orders of chaired pontificals claimed the honor of being "*The called and sent*" of the author of the original map to put the inhabitants of these regions in the sure and certain road to that celestial country. He also informed me that many had traveled for years in different paths, and had followed different guides, all called and sent; but that they, depending upon those guides, had never found that country; and that so great was the increase of new and improved guides, that all the dominions which they enjoyed were likely to be cut up with new roads and paths, without promising a happier result than before. "But," says he, "come let us open this map." We opened it, and to our surprise, found that not one of those guides who claimed the patronage of the author of the map, had been authorized by him, but that he had once authorized a sufficient company of surveyors and engineers, who had exactly defined the country and the way thither. We followed the map, and soon found a road which, although almost covered with grass, shrubs, and trees, led us safely into the confines of Paradise, where in transport I awoke, and found it but a vision. MIRZAB.

#### *On the Millennium.—No. I.*

MANKIND are certainly moving in the horizon of some great and eventful change, into the centre of which all society must inevitably and speedily be carried. The world is in strange commotion; expectation is all aroused—anticipation of something good, splendid, and unknown, is become undoubting and impatient, even to painfulness; and the time is at hand when a plenteous harvest of toil and talent must be reaped from all orders of society, that many run to and fro, and knowledge be increased.

The time is certainly arrived, when the great political establishments, the powers and principalities of the world, which have created and

\* I conjecture the sect called Independents is here alluded to.—Ed.



fostered those warlike feelings, and mercantile and rival interests, so hostile to the spirit of the gospel, and which have led men so far away from nature, must speedily be dissolved; and when the economy of God, which shall be more in unison with the religion of his Son and with nature, shall suddenly make its appearance.

The object of this paper is to show that God has designs of high favor towards man, and will vouchsafe him an age of happiness, in which the entire sum of physical, moral and intellectual good, which can be enjoyed on earth, will be granted.

The subject is one of immense depth and extent. It involves the whole series of scripture history, and prophecy, and is as protracted as the duration of the world itself. Accordingly the reader will not expect the author of this paper to go into a detail of the subordinate parts of a subject of such plenitude and sublimity; but if the two extremes of the providential chain, with a few of the more illustrious links by which they are connected, shall be clearly pointed out, so as to furnish christians with an elementary clue to this grand topic, it is presumed the reader will be sufficiently remunerated for his trouble in reading this essay.

All men exist under a threefold order of relations; first to the natural world; secondly, to one another; and thirdly, to God; and the history of the world demonstrates, that, to mankind in the aggregate, as to each individual, the knowledge of these relations is slow and progressive; that it is not incident to the infant child alone, but also to the infant family of mankind, to stop at these immediate and more obvious relations which subsist between us and matter; that mankind in the aggregate, as well as each individual, have their physical pursuits; and that, therefore, the antediluvian period, characterized by the absence of all governmental arrangements, may, with propriety, be called the physical age of the species.

Secondly, the middle period of the world's history is pre-eminently distinguished for a high regard to that more remote order of relations, which subsists in great and populous empires, as the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman; during which long epocha personal liberty and personal security have been better established; and happiness, which is the end of our existence, less fluctuating and uncertain than it was during the merely physical age, which passed before the flood. This may be styled the *secular* age of our species, concerning which the prophet says, "I beheld until the thrones" i. e. of those empires "were cast down." But,

Thirdly, Mankind having nearly exhausted the limits allotted to them for pursuits purely physical and political, and having, by dint of long experience, learnt the inefficiency of commerce and war to secure happiness, are now deeply inspired with a premonition of some great and incomprehensible change, the present nature of which time alone can fully clear up. This is the *millennial* or *evangelical* age of the world; during which the human race will enjoy great happiness, and that third order of relations which have been revealed as subsisting between men and their Creator and Redeemer, shall be fully investigated, developed, and enjoyed.

Let it not be supposed, however, that these observations are made merely to arrive at the trite conclusion that man is a physical, moral, and intellectual being; but for the important purposes of showing the chain of high and holy providences, by which the God of all mer-

cy and grace, has long been conducting the human family to an age of virtue and happiness; also that he has done it by a course of physical and politico-moral experience, perfectly adapted to human nature, without which mankind would never, for any length of time, have remained either virtuous or happy; and this division of the world into physical, secular, and evangelical ages, is neither arbitrary nor fanciful, but is founded in matter of fact, and abundantly supported by divine declaration. The first age being marked out by a judgment not less notable than the flood; the second issuing in the judgment and total overthrow of the anti-christian governments; and the evangelical age terminating in the final judgment itself. And let no one say that in order to induct the human family into the evangelical age, God has too much protracted the physical and secular ages. Such language would be improper, even if we had made all of past experience which we ought to have made of it. But what improvements have we made of past experience? Do not facts the most numerous, obvious and striking, demonstrate that we have not advanced one step in the art of applying the liberty and security so richly enjoyed in America to the promotion of our happiness, which is the grand and glorious end of all the present, past, and future dispensations of providence in regard to us. For of what value is personal liberty, and personal security, so long as they are prostrated to ambition, speculation, and war; for granting, that the intervention of science, and the milder influence of the gospel has quenched the spirit of war in these states, yet mark the rival interests and intense passions excited by the commercial spirit that is abroad. If the spirit of war is hushed, the fact resembles the case where one unclean spirit makes room for seven others still more abominable than himself; for, at this moment, the United States, the noblest nation in the world, is on the verge of becoming a race of speculators; while their boundless territories, the nation's real estate, lies comparatively unappropriated to their real happiness.

Meanwhile, let the reader bear in mind that history, and especially the holy scriptures, show us that the march of man towards virtue and happiness has been slow and progressive; they show us also that God is exceedingly opposed to, and displeased with, aristocratic and oppressive governments; while, at the same time, the fatal destruction of the antediluvians, clearly evinces the impracticability of existing in any way but under some general government, to secure us at once against foreign force and domestic broils. That, in the approaching age, political authority will be confined to the regulation of its proper concerns, and while all enjoy the sum of physical, moral, and intellectual good—the word of the Lord will have free course and be glorified in the salvation of thousands. So much, at present, for the physical, secular, and evangelical ages, by which the scripture, history, and age of prophecy, are seen to harmonize so admirably with the course of human improvement. PHILIP.

To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.

On Faith.

Connecticut, April 25, 1826.

I FULLY believe with you that much has been said and written on this subject inconsistent with the simplicity of the Word, and tending much to perplex the minds of the disciples of Christ. I accord with you, that faith is the belief of testimony; that the faith with which sal-

vation or eternal life is connected, is the belief of the testimony of the Son of God in the scriptures of truth. But the distinction you appear to make between faith and repentance, in respect to divine influence producing these, appears to me to be unscriptural. You admit the scriptural truth that Christ "is exalted to bestow repentance," (No. 1. vol. ii. p. 85) but you say, (Sentimental Journal, p. 58,) "evidence *alone* produces faith, or testimony is *all* that is necessary to faith." I wish you, to try this principle, and place before your calumniators "evidence" that you are an honest man, and see whether it "produces faith." What means this scripture?—"How can you believe that receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only," or the alone God? Does not Jesus Christ here plainly teach that the evil disposition of the heart biasses the man and causes it to resist, or prevents it from perceiving the evidence which is placed before it? Did he not teach that the cause why the Jews would not come to him, or believe him, was, that they loved darkness rather than light? Do you not think that the cause of some persons defaming you is the prejudice of their own minds, and not any deficiency in the evidence of your good character, which you have given them? Jesus told the Jews, "Because I tell you the truth, you believe me not." They could believe the lies of false prophets. If some other came in his own name, him they could receive; but because the Son of God came in his Father's name, or to exhibit and establish the goodness of that law which they had broken, they would not receive him. They *repented* not that they might believe. Matt. xxi. 32. When Paul was at Corinth preaching "the things concerning the kingdom of God," the cause of many believing not was not a want of evidence of the truth of the divine testimony, but that they "were hardened." Acts xix. 9. Passages of similar import might be added to prove that the cause of unbelief and impenitence is the same, and consequently divine influence is as necessary to remove one as the other. The cause is loving darkness or sin rather than light or holiness. You will please to observe also that Jesus Christ condemned the Jews, which is additional proof that unbelief arises from an evil heart or disposition, and not for want of evidence. Again, "Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." There is, in my view, abundant evidence in the scriptures of truth that the faith which is connected with justification is as much "the gift of God" as repentance or any other fruit of the Spirit. Faith and repentance, &c. are indeed acts of our own minds, but they are all effects of the renewal of our minds by the Holy Spirit. It is no more congenial to the mind of a sinner to believe to the saving of the soul, than it is to repent of sin or to love God. I have no desire to go beyond the word on this or any other divine subject; neither will I reject the plain testimony of that word, because the judgments of God are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. I apprehend that "the matter" of saving faith is something more than "that Christ died for our sins, and was buried and is risen from the dead," unless we suppose that the belief that Christ died for our sins, implies a belief of his holy doctrine respecting the law of God, the evil of sin, and our just condemnation. I am very confident that I believed the facts that Christ died on the cross, was buried and rose from the dead, long before I had any faith that "overcomes the world." These facts may be

believed, while the holy truth connected with these, is denied and rejected. Mr. Fishback, in the extracts you have published, well observes, when considering the truth to be believed, that "the gospels written by the four evangelists, contains the history of Christ's incarnation, life, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession; and one of the evangelists tells us the design of his history:—"These are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that, believing, you might have eternal life through his name." He remarks, "It is of his own will that God begets men to the faith, with the word of truth." He also declares that belief and love "unite in saving faith." If so, divine influence must be as necessary to produce saving faith as love. Mr. Fishback likewise remarks, "He (the Spirit) has imparted saving faith in the Lord Jesus." I notice these remarks of Mr. Fishback's, because you remark that his "observations concerning faith" are "expressive of (your) sentiments." I have no idea of faith as a principle in the heart separated from the word of truth; but I understand that it is by the operation of the Spirit that the truth is believed to the salvation of the soul. In your reply to P. H. [No. 9. vol. ii.] you observe, "Some of them who believed the ancient revelations, like Lydia, and whose hearts were thereby opened, honestly disposed," &c. I beseech you, dear sir, to compare this representation of the subject, with that of the Holy Spirit. The inspired historian, writing of Lydia, remarks, "Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things that were spoken by Paul." You represent the opening of the heart, as the effect of attending to, or believing the truth. The Spirit of Truth represents it as the cause. You observe, "We are asked—why do not all believe the same testimony?" and "another, and another why is proposed. And so it ends with a *why* just where we began." I would rather say it ends just where the Spirit of Truth ends it. We may propose questions which are answered by the revealed truth. Thus far we may go; but here curiosity and pride must be stayed. If we ask, Why do not all who have the gospel believe it? The answer is, Because they love darkness rather than light. "You *will not* come," &c. said the faithful witness. If the question is, Why do some believe rather than others? the answer is, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." "You has he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins," &c. "But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ." "By grace you are saved," &c. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works," &c. If the question is, why does God thus quicken some rather than others? the answer is, "He has mercy on whom he will have mercy." "For your pleasure all things are," &c. Here the divine testimony ends the subject, and here we ought to end. But if any are disposed to murmur against this truth, there are a few questions for them to answer. "He that reproves God, let him answer it." "Is your eye evil because I am good?" "Shall I not do what I will with my own?" "Who are you, O man! that reply against God," &c. "Surely the Judge of all the earth will do right." AMICUS.

—  
To Amicus.

If, as you say, "faith is the belief of testimony," there can be no faith without testimony;



and if faith be no more than the belief of testimony, nothing more than testimony enters into the nature of faith. This is admitted by all persons of reflection on the subject of faith properly called human. But many will have that faith which is so often spoken of in the christian scriptures, to be something more than the belief of truth, or the belief of the testimony of God; and even of those who contend that faith is simply the belief of the gospel, or testimony concerning Jesus the Lord, some will have this faith distinguished in some way, either as the effect of regeneration, as a holy or spiritual act, as inwrought by some physical agency in the heart, or some way differing from the usual and commonly received import of the term. Hence so much mystery, and mysterious reasoning on the subject of "saving faith." As nothing of this kind of reasoning or definition appears in the inspired writings, we are naturally led to look for its origin and progress somewhere else. We can soon trace it to "Mystery, Babylon the Great," but no farther. And here I am willing to leave it. But many wish to leave only a part of it there, and seek to introduce an improved system of definitions into the christian vocabulary.

If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is more worthy of reception, and produces greater certainty; and this is all the difference the New Testament presents to me betwixt faith in the testimony of man, and faith in the testimony of God. But this will not satisfy those of a metaphysical taste, who are philosophically inquisitive into the doctrine of causation. They must, step by step, ascend to the ultimate cause, or to the most remote cause of every thing; and while each one pursues the course which education or chance opens to his feet, and terminates his inquiries only because he can travel no farther, the christian taught by God is meditating the things revealed, which seraphs admire, and seeking to enjoy a fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. But this is not the worst of it. One believer not unfrequently contemns another because he cannot soar so high in the doctrine of causation as himself. He dislikes him, too, not because he is not as good a christian, but because he is not so wise a philosopher as himself. Hence one christian philosopher terminates his inquiries here—"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed;" or, "You believe not because you are not my sheep." Another, who is not so strong, or perhaps stronger, terminates his inquiries here—"They searched the scriptures with all readiness of mind; many of them, therefore, believed." Each one loves his own theory, and is zealous for it as though it were the gospel of Christ. Indeed, some often call their doctrine of grace "The Gospel." Many texts are brought into the field, and strung together, whose connexion is dis severed; and not one of which was, perhaps, designed to prove any such theory. Some texts are of doubtful import as respects either theory. These are declared to be lawful plunder, and each belligerent, according to his martial skill, captivates them to his service. Thus the war is protracted and the strife maintained, which it is the desire of every christian to see terminated. To come to the drift and scope of your communication, I would observe, First. That you seem to gather from the Christian Baptist (how lawfully I will not inquire) that I make a distinction between faith and repentance as respects divine influence in their production. This I never intended; nor do I see that affirming that "evidence alone produces faith," and

that "repentance is bestowed," implies that there is any difference in the origin of either as respects divine influence. In one instance we spoke not of the origin of faith, but of its nature. In the other, of the origin of repentance, and not of its nature. But we are so much accustomed to a quaint orthodox style, that if a person speaks of faith or repentance, and does not always preface his remarks by observing that both are "the gift of God," he is at once supposed not to be sound in the faith.

It has often surprised me to find with what tenacity the sound of some texts is held, regardless of the meaning, because the sound, more than the sense, suits some favorite position. Of this very species is the text now before us. I am quite certain that it is generally quoted to support a position which was not before the mind of the writer. In the new translation, which we have just published, of Campbell, Macknight, and Doddridge, it reads thus: "And when they had heard these things, they acquiesced, and glorified God, saying, God has then given to the Gentiles also reformation to life." Taken in all the attendant circumstances, it just means—God has then no longer confined his benignity to the Jews, but has, to the Gentiles, as to them, given the same reformation to life. But this is not the text to which the allusion is. It is, "Him has God exalted at his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give reformation to Israel and remission of sins." This as evidently refers to the Jews as a people, as the former does to the Gentiles as a people. And both, I apprehend, mean no more than that Jesus, as a Saviour, has conferred upon both Jews and Gentiles the blessings of life through a reformation proceeding from a belief of the favor of God through himself. And the term "also," in reference to the Gentiles, shows that it had already, prior to their calling, been granted to the Jews. But this is *toto calo* different from the popular notion of what is called "evangelical repentance" wrought in the heart of any individual, Jew or Gentile.

In the second place, I observe that I perfectly accord with what you say, that "it is not the want of evidence, but the want of disposition;" so not the want of ability, but the power of prejudice, and vicious inclinations, or a wicked heart, which prevents many from hearkening to, believing, and obeying the gospel. Hence unbelief is a sin. But were it so that a want of evidence, or of ability to believe, was the cause of so many infidels, then infidelity could not be a sin, or a worthy cause of condemnation. But God has given sufficient evidence, and consequently sufficient ability to every man to believe the testimony of his Son; and, therefore, the unbelief of every man is chargeable to his own wickedness. Nor is there, in my view, the least discrepancy between these positions and that "that evidence alone produces faith, or is all that is necessary to faith," when speaking of the nature of faith.—For faith, however it comes into existence, is no more than the belief of truth; and it is evidence alone that ascertains and demonstrates what is truth. That the evidence of truth does not arrest the attention of all, is equally true of things human and divine. And it has been often and long remarked how easily men assent to a proposition which they wish to be true, and with what difficulty they assent to one averse from their inclinations. This only proves the influence which the will has upon the understanding. In other cases, where there is no previous bias for or against any proposition, the assent is just

proportioned to the evidence. These remarks are as true in reference to the dogmas of sectaries, as they are with regard to matters of simple belief.

I observe in the third place, that what you call "the matter of faith," or the truth to be believed, as more than that "Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again," does not exactly accord with the emphasis which the holy apostles lay upon these superlative truths. It has often been admitted that thousands acknowledge these as facts from common education, as the Turks do that Mahomet was heaven's last prophet, who do not understand their import, nor recognize the evidence on which they rest. On this we lay no stress. No man can truly believe them and not overcome the world. We have never said or supposed that a man's *saying* he believed them, while they did not work effectually in his heart and life, was any evidence that he believed them; nor do we think that they can operate to the saving of the soul, unless when received in their scriptural import. On this topic we have repeatedly written very plainly.

I remark in the fourth place, that the greatest objection I have to the scope and drift of your communication, is, that it goes to the trite, inoperative, ineffectual, and cheerless conclusions of the Geneva metaphysics. I know right well how many texts can be paraded in support of these conclusions, and you know very well how many texts can be paraded on the other side. I advocate neither side of this controversy, because neither, in my judgment, was the design of the apostolic writings. And I am very sure that to *sinners* there is no gospel in the Calvinistic system, as it stands in the creeds of those sects who embrace it. It is no gospel to proclaim, that "God from all eternity elected a few individuals to everlasting life; that these few of Adam's progeny are all that he loved; the rest he doomed permissively to everlasting death; for these few elect ones, and for these only, his Son was born, lived and died. These only he effectually calls, these he quickens by his Holy Spirit, and these shall, in spite of all opposition, persevere to the end and be saved." I say this *honest front* of Calvinism, how true soever in metaphysics, is not the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, and all those texts which are brought to prove it are either wrested, perverted, or misapplied.

Though born, educated, brought up, and I might say, confirmed in this system, by all the reading, and study of my life; I am, from the apostolic writings alone, convinced, that to teach, preach, or proclaim such a system, is not to teach, preach, or proclaim the gospel I find in the New Testament. And I can see no reason nor propriety in opposing such a system to deny that God rules over all, that his counsel stands, that he does all his pleasure, that he influences the heart of every one that believes, as he did that of Lydia. If you please, that he gives his Holy Spirit to all that ask him or to all them who believe—that our whole salvation is of favor, free as the light of the sun, and that God is its sole author: for all things in it and connected with it are of God. I say, I see no reason to deny or oppose these positions, to maintain the conclusion—that every man who hears the glad tidings may believe them and be saved if he pleases, or if he truly desires it.

This conclusion, strange as it may appear, I find no intelligent Calvinist able or disposed to controvert, however tenacious about his original sin, his total depravity, and his effectual calling.

I thank God that he has given the fullest proofs

of philanthropy, and not of personal regards; that he has in sincerity called men to look to his Son and be saved, and given the fullest assurance that whosoever will, may, can, and ought to come to him, and be saved; and that all that disobey this call have no excuse for their sin. This may be called any *ism* men please, but that it is in accordance with the whole scope, design, and letter of the inspired volume, I doubt not.

That multitudes love darkness rather than the light, and the gratification of their brutal and animal appetites rather than obeying the gospel, I have to lament; but one thing I know, they can not implicate the benevolence of God, nor charge him either with partiality or injustice in condemning them for this course.

That the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, and delivered Paul out of all his tribulations, is equally true; and that Lydia, before that day, was a pious worshipper of God, and that Paul escaped by his own feet, and once by a basket, is just as true. It is also true that the corn which I eat is the gift of God, and so is the faith and reformation which I enjoy. I say this merely as a hint to show how easily all those texts can be rationally and scripturally understood, which are so often presented to prove dogmas which prophets and apostles never thought of, nor entered into their hearts to conceive. You will see, then, that there is no necessity for stopping to inquire into the truth or falsehood of those dogmas, so long as the scope and drift of these conclusions are at variance with the whole current of revelation, nor of examining particular proofs, so long as the conclusions themselves make both law and gospel a dead letter, and represent men as dead as the stones of the field in a sense called "spiritual."

Many have labored with great toil to take the texts one by one from their opponents; but the whole contest is mere logomachy. Of this species is the text you have quoted from Luke's history: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." A correct translation, in most instances, is all that is necessary to settle many of these controversies. Doddridge, a Calvinist too, renders it "As many as were determined for eternal life believed." This is as ambiguous as the original, which Dr. Campbell has proved to be the true method to be pursued in giving a fair translation. For the determination may either be that of the Creator or the creature, which of the two must be ascertained from other considerations than the mere import of the term. Whitby has it, "As many as were disposed for eternal life believed," and argues that the original term is used but once in the same form by Luke in this treatise, and there it must signify one's own disposition—"Paul was disposed to go on foot." I mention this to show much may be subtracted from the imposing authority of a few texts whose sound seems to sanction dogmas at variance with the whole scope of the gospel of Jesus.

You will not, my dear sir, suppose that I consider you as wishing to support the dogmas of Calvin or any other man: I have a far higher opinion of your intelligence and virtue than to suppose this. I know you aim at the mere understanding of the scriptures, and acknowledge no man as a master in these things. But I think your communication, however well intended, and of this I entertain no doubt, is modelled upon that system, and terminates in sheer fatalism. And I know from experience how easy it is to be under the influence of impressions and biasses directing our views into particular chan-



nels when it is not our intention to go farther than the bible seems to authorize us. There is one thing, I think, must be obvious, that it can be of no use to any sinner or unregenerate person, either to believe, or to have preached to him, that only the elected sinners can believe the gospel. I would wish to attend to all the items in your communication; but time and space forbid. I have been on generals—for particulars again.

EDITOR.

*Independent Baptist to the Christian Baptist.*

MR. EDITOR—If, in my last epistle, I have sinned against the law requiring us to love as brethren, my defence must be that it was not intended. As “perfection” was not pretended to, you will forgive the exceptionable words and phrases, arising from a strong feeling on the subject of discussion. It is a difficult attainment to be able to admonish in the simple and mild language which soothes while it sanctifies. The defence you make in reply to me has been carefully read. I am not satisfied; and, to speak candidly, it is, in my opinion, the first instance where the editor of the “Christian Baptist” seemed to be at a loss. *Aliquando Homerus dormitat.* The real question is not touched, and instead of a manly and triumphant appeal to apostolic principle and example, you have produced a *thing* made up of verbose declamation and sophisticated special pleading. With the remark that what you say of “consistency” may be generally true, but not called for, I hasten to the point.

With the hope of escaping from the clutches of the Dialogue, you assert that the “only bond of union among christians, advocated by the Christian Baptist, is a sincere and hearty conviction expressed or confessed by the lips, that Jesus is the Christ,” &c. Taking advantage of the simplicity of this proposition, you go on to say that when this belief exhibits itself by an overt act, the individual so confessing and acting must be recognized as a brother. Now this is all true in terms, and yet in fact it is sheer trifling. Let me follow your example by way of illustration. Suppose I affected to prove the whole christian world to be one society of enlightened, sanctified and regenerated individuals, in a state of gracious acceptance and reconciliation with the true God. Having you for a model, I would declare in favor of charity in loose and general terms, and close with “It is written,” “Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.” Who does not perceive, that excepting a few obstinate Jews, I have (according to your mode of argument) demonstrated the new creatureship of the Quaker, the Pope, and the “Christian Baptist,” with all the christian world, man, woman and child. Nay, it might secure the salvation of the Turk and the “restitution” of devils. My antagonist, if I had one, would no doubt reply, “It is so written, but the use you make of the text is sophistical; you have no right to dislocate and insulate these words, thereby giving them an application not intended by the Holy Spirit. Does such a confession (he would ask) imply the expression of so many words, or the belief of a character, the ingredients, features, and qualities of which are to be learned in the rest of the divine testimony?” The only answer which this question admits of, would contain the refutation of my theory, and *mutatis mutandis*, it is your refutation also.

Waving the advantage I might claim, by a general view of the Messiah’s character, I will

confine myself to a single trait. When Peter said, “God has made that same Jesus whom you have crucified both Lord and Christ,” and it was believed by a Jew, was not his confession that Jesus is the Christ at least tantamount to the following, viz. “I confess Jesus of Nazareth to be the promised Messiah—the Prophet like to, nay, greater than Moses; that he is King of Zion; and that (if possible) I am bound to “hear” Jesus with greater submission and obedience more exact than ever Jew heard Moses the servant of God?” If so, the one foundation implies a hearty conviction of Christ’s royal supremacy as sole lawgiver in Zion, and instead of an “overt act,” (as you loosely express it) as the exhibition of this conviction, it will, nay, must be followed by obedience to the peculiar institutes of his house or kingdom. Your very charitable recognition of Paido-Baptists, &c. as brethren, serves to neutralize the distinction between truth and error—between allegiance and rebellion. As for the societies of sprinkled “new creatures,” with whom you could wish (if they would let you) to have “full communion,” equal to what you have with the whole Baptist society, they resemble what a synagogue of Jews would be, who rejected circumcision, sacrificed swine, and new-modelled and modified the law to suit convenience and expediency. They might think themselves Jews—some time-serving Rabbi might call them brethren Jews; but if they claimed Moses as their lawgiver, I would justly charge them with gross inconsistency; a charge which, upon analogous ground, is now proved against the “Christian Baptist.”

Your reply suggested the query, “Where now are all the scripture proofs to which Mr. Editor, in a good cause, can make so powerful appeal?” The feeling was natural; for, in christian sincerity, I consider your bible knowledge to be immense. True, in one instance you call upon Paul to help you, by raising a question as to the probable pliability of the apostle’s conscience in certain cases. But I am verily persuaded that Paul rejects this unholy alliance. His Master commissioned him to teach the baptized disciples to observe all things whatsoever had been commanded. This tested and increased their love. When churches were built on the one foundation, the divine pattern was carefully copied. If irregularities crept in, he reprov’d and admonished; if they repented and confessed him the ambassador of the Great King, he rejoiced and approved them as brethren; if they repented not, he denounced them as fallen; and trampling on the accommodating conscientiousness of degenerate men, in the majestic moral attitude of a man acting “in Christ’s stead,” he decreed, “We have no such custom, neither the churches of God.” This is a church question, and not a judging any man’s personal piety and conversion. If a man says, “I believe,” &c. well, I judge him not as concerns his final salvation. But if he hint at “full communion” with the church of Christ, I must reply, “Arise and be baptized,” &c. “O, says he, I have been solemnly sprinkled by a Levite already.” Here I pause till he obey. But what would you do? You would call him brother Paido, and eat and drink with him in “full communion,” expressing approbation of the thing represented and of him in so far as he conforms to it. If this new creature should ask me why I refused him, holding, as he said he did, to one Lord, one faith, one hope, &c. I would tell him that faith without works is dead; that he could not break bread; that Christ must be obeyed; and that no in-

stance, divinely authenticated, had ever appeared of any man having believed the gospel, in whom it failed to produce a desire, and willingness to be baptized, and to continue "stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine," &c. Here your practice and mine would be directly opposite, and yet I appeal to the readers of the "Christian Baptist," whether I do not exactly conclude with your printed sentiments. If so, the charge of inconsistency remains, and the panoply of the Dialogue is impenetrable. But what need of argument; it is a palpable evasion of the question, to talk of recognising a society of "new creatures" as a New Testament church, who, whatever may be their piety and solemnity, are not ashamed to confess that their church is organized and upheld according to the suggestion of human policy. *Horresco inferens!*

You attempt to fix the charge of inconsistency on me by a counter-dialogue, going to show that your Christian Baptist agrees in many respects with the Regulars, and that, therefore, you would be inconsistent if you did not maintain "full communion" with them—"the legs of the lame are not equal." That another objector could prove you inconsistent, by a different road, is surely not my fault, neither does it invalidate the force and truth of my position. "See you to that." Besides, your argument is inconclusive. It is as if I had engaged to show that gold and tin are both metals, but essentially different, and in order to do so I have pointed out the differential quality. You have endeavored to prove them to be one and the same metal, by enumeration of the qualities common to both—and with the same truth and fairness with which you attempt to roll over the reproach upon me, you might affect to assure the world that you had proved the identity of gold and tin. To make the best of your argument, the "full communion" which you enjoy and advocate, if carried out to its legitimate extent, instead of producing in the church the visible image of Christ, would create a resemblance to a certain "great image, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." This is the dream; cannot you, Mr. Editor, tell the interpretation thereof?

The declamation you have indulged in, with the view of decrying strictness, separation, &c. is what is termed in these days, liberal, charitable and kind; but most astonishing as coming from you. It breathes the spirit which has lowered the tone of scriptural feeling, and gone far already in the production of a homogeneous nondescript, in which the church and the world are blended and the eternal distinction lost. Suffer the word of respectful and affectionate admonition—Ponder well the paths of your feet—Be warned—You have been at the monastic tropic, and are now it seems leaving the line—Watch and pray, or by and by you will be at the latitudinarian tropic—and instead of shining (as my prayer has been and now is) in the firmament of the kingdom of heaven, a fixed star—you may yet resemble (which may God's mighty power prevent) the moon, at best but a satellite of the earth, having this motto, "Little light, less heat, and many changes."

May God keep you in his way—and long preserve you an instrument of good in his church—"Now therefore, O God, strengthen his hands"—Instead of leaning upon "Associations" as a prop, when the regular or irregular Sanballats are wishing to prevent you from repairing the wall, craftily saying "Let us meet together in the house of God within the temple," &c. then is your time to stretch forth your hand like good

Nehemiah and say, "should such a man as I flee? and who is there that being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in." May your leaf never wither and your end be PEACE! I remain yours, &c.

AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST.

Saturday morning, May 20th, 1826.

*To an Independent Baptist.*

DEAR SIR,—It appears from your favor before me that the grounds on which your first charge of inconsistency was based are sandy. You labor, indeed, to fasten upon me the same charge, but rather on new grounds than on the old. For your remarks upon what I have called the bond of union and peace, are directed more to affect the principle of union itself, than my declaration on which your first letter was founded. So that in fact, and in effect, you now contend with the principle itself, and not with my practice. You do not now admit, that the only bond of peace, and consequently of christian union, is "a sincere and hearty conviction expressed or confessed by the lips that Jesus is the Christ," &c. You ought then to have manfully and explicitly attacked the principle when first advanced, in the first volume of this work; and not now have demurred at the carrying of this principle into practice. For with all your ingenuity, this, to the judicious, must appear to be the sticking point with you; the very thing itself against which you object.

It was not "with the hope of escaping the clutches of the dialogue" that I now assert this principle. Nay, verily, it has been asserted and contended for more than once or twice in the first volume of this work. I take no "advantage of the simplicity of this proposition" when I observe "that when this belief exhibits itself by an overt act the individual so confessing and acting must be considered as a brother." This you say, even in your last, "is true in terms"—and strange to tell, "yet in fact it is sheer trifling." This last assertion is yet to be proved. And here you fly off in a tangent. Why, dear sir, do you labor to show me that the simple pronunciation of the terms of any position, such as "that Jesus is the Christ;" or "that every spirit that confesses that Christ has come in the flesh is of God," regardless of the import of these terms in the scripture sense of them, is not sufficient to produce confidence in the person, so pronouncing these terms, as a christian? Is there such a position or declaration in this work? I say there is not. You are really fighting with a creature of your own formation, and not with me. And here, give me leave to observe, you afford me fresh evidence of the unassailable character of the ground on which I stand; for with all your ingenuity and dexterity, and these I admit are conspicuous, you cannot touch the principle otherwise than by caricaturing an abuse of it. And with your remarks of making the pronunciation of any terms, found in the bible, regardless of the biblical import, the criteria of a disciple, or a bond of union, I most cordially agree. You must perceive then that you are at war with some creature of your own formation, and not with me, for I will join you and aid in annihilating this spectre of your own imagination. Strike it once, and I will strike it twice. We can annihilate it, for it has nothing immortal nor indissoluble about it. But here let me put you on your guard. Take heed that when fighting against a monstrous production, you do not imperceptibly direct your artillery against the offspring of heaven, and be found in the ranks of



creed makers and dogmatists who defame the one foundation, and, Babel like, project the basis of a city and tower which is to reach from the plains of Shinar to the heavens.

When this half of your letter is disposed of, it is all disposed of as respects the topic on which you commenced your correspondence. The charge of inconsistency is disposed of; and whether you or I will have to patronize it, is not for you or me to say. Neither of us would, in civil courts, be admitted as evidence on a question of this kind—This is the province of the jurors. And with their verdict I am satisfied. Are you?

The new ground of inconsistency which you have now taken, arises not from my remarks to a correspondent in Missouri; but from my remarks to an "Independent Baptist." And here permit me to remark, that you have taken for granted what has not been asserted yet; that Baptists and Paido-Baptists should, irrespective of their difference on the subject of baptism, break bread together. Whether they ought or ought not, has not been asserted by me. This question is yet, with me, *sub judice*. It is true that I expressed a wish to be on the same terms of communion with the pious of all denominations as with the Baptist. This is a desire I am very far from hoping is peculiar to myself. But if I had asserted it as my conviction, and upon that conviction had acted so far, as to break bread with Paido-Baptists on the same principles as those on which I would unite with a Baptist community, your remarks would rather confirm me in the practice than have caused me to doubt of its propriety. For I reckon that when any person attacks any principle or practice, and either fights with something else under that name, or is compelled to adopt principles of argument which would condemn other principles and practices of the propriety of which there is no doubt, at least with himself, this procedure rather proves than disproves the position against which he argues. This appears, if you will indulge me once more, to be a little the case with the Independent Baptist. Your arguments will equally condemn any intercommunity of worship with them. You cannot, on your principles, pray with them, sing praise with them, or unite with them in one individual act of social worship—I pray you consider this.

With what propriety you compare a "society of sprinkled new creatures," to a "synagogue of Jews who reject circumcision and sacrifice swine," I confess I do not see. There is no analogy between the two cases. Erroneous and weak as the sprinkled new creatures are, they do not reject circumcision in some sense, nor baptism in some sense; nay, they are too much attached to circumcision. They dislike the knife and prefer water. But there is no "rejection" of the ordinance of baptism by sprinkled new creatures; but a mistake of what it is. I think we can find an exact comparison which expresses the full amount of the pravity of the error and practice of the honest baby-sprinklers. It is this:

Paternus says to Filius bring me a book; Filius, eager to obey his father, goes and brings him a leaf of paper. Paternus, Why did you not obey me? Father, says Filius, I did; I went at your command, and lo, here it is, pointing to the leaf. That is not a book, says Paternus. I thought it was, replied Filius. Paternus says, well my son, I accept your obedience, and pardon your mistake, because it was not a wilful one. Paternus calls another son. Go Junius, says he,

and bring me a book. Junius goes to play at tennis. His father indignant calls for him. He appears. Where is the book, says he, for which I sent you? O father, replied Junius, I preferred a game at tennis to bringing you the book; I thought you might go for it yourself, send some body else, or do without it. "You are a rebel, sir, and you shall be beaten with many stripes." This, Mr. I. B. is your Jew, and that is my Paido-Baptist christian brother. Now make you the comment, there is the text.

You are equally unfortunate in your comparison of "gold and tin." You make water the differential quality. It is a pretty comparison; but ill adapted. I did not make myself gold, and the Baptists, in general, tin, nor *vice versa*: consequently I was not engaged in proving gold and tin to be one metal; and if I had, you would not have proved them to be different by making water the essential differential quality. You will consider this.

Your "dream" and Nebuchadnezzar's are nothing akin. His image was partly gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay. Mine is the representation of a family of babes, striplings, young men, and fathers all of one faith. Now to compare this image to Nebuchadnezzar's is worse than to make water the essential difference between gold and tin.

It was not the paucity of scripture documents which I have to urge in defence of the grounds assumed in my former letter that caused me to content myself with a reference to the alleged practice of Paul in breaking bread with the congregations to which he wrote letters of commendation, reproof and admonition. It was because I thought a hint of this sort was enough. For, indeed, I find no point more fully developed, in all the epistles, than the one foundation, and the duty of all christians to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Were I to enter upon this topic, I would find line upon line, and precept upon precept, enforcing this maxim, "wherefore receive you one another without regard to difference of opinion," on which the apostle writes the largest section in the epistle to the Romans. (Chapters xiv. and xv.) I would call to my aid, his letters to the Corinthians, and his demonstrations, to other congregations, of this principle, that "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails any thing, but a new creature, but faith which works by love." But of this again. If there is any position laid down with unusual plainness, and supported with more than ordinary demonstration, in the epistolary part of the New Testament, it is this: That christians should receive one another as Christ has received them, *with all their intellectual weaknesses*. This you may call Latitudinarianism; and such a Latitudinarian, I pray you may become.

If you have any thing to add upon the principle or practice resulting from the bond of peace which I have long since advocated, I will hear you cheerfully again. You have one advantage over me. No person knows who the Independent Baptist is; but alas! I am as a target on a naked hill. Perhaps if you would authorize me to unbutton your coat it might contribute to explain some items in your correspondence; but without your consent not one button shall be unplaced.

In the mean time, however, I cannot close without most sincerely reciprocating your kind wishes and unfeigned desires for myself and the cause in which I am engaged.

Yours sincerely,

EDITOR.